A Broken Cup

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A Broken Cup

by GhostIsReading

Summary

Dr Hannibal Lecter, Chesapeak Ripper and Serial Killer owned a Bentley. Used said Bentley to cart around the bodies of his victims and had thus far been uncaught. Of course that is if you didn't count Will Graham, profiler and FBI Criminal Psychology Professor, discovering him when he was hiding a corpse of his own.

Fake Dating au because they need an alibi for murder.

Notes

Disclaimer: I do not own Hannibal in any capacity.

See the end of the work for more notes

Gone To The Dogs

Will hadn't really meant to kill his Dog Groomer. If he had to describe it to his students in the FBI college, he would have called it a case of Second Degree murder. This was because although it was not premeditated, he did indeed intend to inflict grievous bodily harm on Mr Ronald Weston. Mr Weston was a Dog Groomer that did home visits which was rather handy for Will as he didn't often have time to drag all six of his dogs to the groomers on a regular basis, it was just much easier for the groomer to come to him. He had employed Mr Weston's services for only a few months when he arrived home from work at the college earlier than usual and found the man hitting Buster.

Will saw red.

So yes, Will murdered the Dog Groomer. He only wished that he had beaten him to death with his fists rather than stabbing him. It would have been poetic justice.

It was easier than it should have been to clean up after stabbing the man to death. He was well versed in forensics and knew how to make sure that there was no evidence of the crime to be found. There was the issue that it would be down in Mr Weston's work diary that he was coming to Will's place and he would need to get rid of the car…

He wrapped the body in a tarp and shoved it into the man's own car. It was a hideously yellow Mini which meant that it was rather distinctive. He rolled up the bathroom mat which the majority of blood had landed before scrubbing the floor with bleach. He took the bloodied mat out the back and put it in the trash can before dousing it in petrol and lighting it on fire. It seemed to take an age to burn down but eventually all that was left were ashes. To further hide the ashes, after he dumped a cup of water in the can to make sure all the fire was out, he took out his trash from the kitchen and filled it.

He checked on his dogs. Thankfully they all seemed to be okay. Buster wasn't hurt despite how nasty the hit had looked. Will sagged in relief and spent a few moments fussing over all of them before refilling their water and food bowls. He made sure the front door was locked behind him. The evening was far from over. He had a car and body to hide.

In the end he decided to drive the car for a few miles. The body in the trunk of the car weighed heavily on Will's mind and he desperately hoped that he wouldn't be pulled over by the police for any reason so he made sure to keep to the speed limit. Two service stations away from his home he finally pulled over. He would think about how he would get home afterwards. He could only focus on what he was doing at that moment, his heart beating loudly in his ears. He had never felt so alive.

There was only one other car in the lot and it was rather fancy looking. Other than giving it a cursory look Will ignored it. The owner was most likely in the rest stop. It was too dark to see if there was anyone in the car so it was definitely too dark to see Will clearly.

Will pulled the body from the trunk, grunting at the weight, his right rotator cuff straining. Thankfully Mr Weston hadn't been a large man. It took a little maneuvering but He had the tarp-wrapped body over his good shoulder in a fireman's lift as if it was a heavy sack of potatoes.

A car door slammed.

Will froze. It felt as if his heart had stopped. Slowly he turned towards the noise and saw a shadow of a man pulling something eerily similar to what Will had over his shoulder, out of the trunk of the fancy car he had seen earlier. What were the chances of two murderers disposing their victims in the same place at the same time? Apparently quite high.

The crunch of gravel under foot filled the air as the man approached Will with his own corpse wrapped in tarp. Will forced himself to breathe evenly so he wouldn't hyperventilate. Oh god, the man was coming towards Will instead of going on with his own business! Seriously, he felt like screaming at the guy, you do your business and I'll do mine. There was no need to- Will's frantic thoughts were cut off abruptly by the other man speaking.

"Nice evening for a walk." The man had a smooth voice with a slight european accent. He couldn't quite place where it was from though.

"A bit cold." Will shrugged his free shoulder wondering where they were going to go from there. His heart hammered in his chest. They were both clearly carrying corpses but it was too dark to see each other's faces. He wished he had thought to bring along his gun. Will winced at that thought. He had already killed one man and suddenly he was willing to kill

another?! He dropped out of the police force because he couldn't fire his gun and yet here he was after stabbing a man for hitting his dog and thinking of killing another for having seen him trying to dispose of it. There was something seriously wrong with him. Maybe this time he would just use his hands, wrap them around the stranger's throat and squeeze until the life left his eyes.

"I'll be your alibi if you be mine?" The other man offered.

Will recoiled in surprise. What the hell?! He had honestly not expected that. He was instantly suspicious. Surely a man with such a nice car wouldn't need an alibi from some random bloke? He most likely had enough money to make the police look away.

"Mutually assured destruction?" Will replied and was thankful that his voice came out clear and steady. It wasn't a bad idea. Oh who was he kidding it was a terrible idea! How did he know if this guy was going to keep his word? He didn't even know his name or anything about him or why he had murdered his victim.

"Exactly." Will had a feeling the man was smiling. "Dr Hannibal Lector, I would shake your hand but…" He trailed off.

Now Will had the opportunity to give a fake name. He could just throw Dr. Hannibal Lecter under the bus if the police came sniffing but instead found himself giving his own name in return.

"Will Graham." Shit.

"Pleasure."

"We uh, we should probably get a move on." Will felt incredibly awkward and Mr Weston was starting to feel rather heavy in his good shoulder.

“Of course.” Hannibal agreed. “I hope you don’t mind if I lead the way? We can display the bodies together which will make it more difficult to find the culprit.”

“Display?” Will repeated. “Why display? I had planned on just, I don’t know, burying the body.” What kind of a creep was this guy?! Then again Will didn't really have a leg stand on seeing as he was there for the same reason: body disposal. God he wished he had a drink.

“How pedestrian.” Hannibal tsked in disappointment as he strode ahead. “Tell me Will, what did that pig do that drove you to murder him. I am assuming that this is your first kill yes? So it must have been rather bad.”

“I walked in on him hitting my dog.” Will sighed. Hannibal already knew his name, he might as well tell him. “He’s a home visiting Dog Groomer. I came home early and saw him hit my dog.”

“How rude.” Hannibal commented. “This pig,” Will had a feeling that he was now speaking about his own victim. “Had the audacity to be rude to my receptionist. The poor dear was left distraught and I had to force her to take some paid leave. " He frowned." he wasn't even at my office for an appointment."

"Then he deserved it." Will drawled sarcastically but the retort seemed to go straight over Hannibal's head.

"Precisely."

Will rolled his eyes behind Hannibal’s back. “So what exactly are you a doctor of, Dr Lecter?”

“I’m a psychiatrist.” Ugh.

“I’m not sure I can be your alibi anymore.” Will couldn’t help but quip. “I don’t like psychiatrists.”

“And what exactly do you do Mr Graham?”

“I teach classes on how to psychoanalyze.”

“Ah here is perfect.” Hannibal announced instead of responding to Will.

“Oh thank god.” Will dropped Mr Weston’s corpse on the ground with a groan and stretched his back. The weight had started to really hurt his back and pull on his rotator cuff injury.

“Now let’s see what we have to work with.”

As Hannibal unwrapped Will’s corpse from its tarp, he took the opportunity to pull out his phone and with the flash on he snapped a photo of Hannibal unwrapping said corpse. The flash lit up the little forested area.

“Delete that Mr Graham.” Hannibal’s cold voice cut through the blinding darkness that descended after the flash had ended. Both had been blinded by the sudden light.

“It is merely for insurance.” Will explained.

Another flash filled the forest.

“It is merely for insurance.” Hannibal paroted back.

“Touché.”

It was a tense standoff as they both waited for their eyes to readjust to the darkness but eventually they got back to work on displaying the bodies how Hannibal wanted. It was as Hannibal was arranging the bodies that Will finally realised who he was with.

Dr Hannibal Lecter was the Chesapeak Ripper. Shit. Play it cool Graham, it's bad enough that he knows that you know he is a murderer and has a photo of him, Will told himself sternly as he took a deep breath. He can't know. God he wished he had his knife or gun with him.

Will helped the Ripper display the kills. It was beautiful. He had never had the chance to be at a Ripper's crime scene and had only seen photos so this was a real treat. He had gotten the chance to see art in the making. Will couldn't hold himself back, he was never good at being a bystander.

Under torch light from their phones the two of them worked to twist and force the bodies into Hannibal's design. The corpse that Hannibal had brought was missing his tongue and lungs.

"I took his tongue because of his rude thoughtless words." Will mumbled to himself as he slipped into the Ripper's head space. "I take his lungs as he does not deserve to breathe the same air as me." Will swayed on the spot like a pendulum. "The body is discarded on the floor because he is not worth my time." This one would not be found and seen as done by the Ripper, it was not one of his sounders.

"My what an intriguing boy you are." An accented voice broke will from his trance.

Will flinched as he found Hannibal in his face. His warm minty breath brushing across his cheek, rosy from the cold. He should take a step back. He really should and yet he couldn't make his feet move.

"Haven't you ever heard of personal space?" He retorted instead of trying to deal with the comment.

"Of course, my apologies." The Ripper took a step back. "How would you like your dog groomer displayed, dear Will?"

Will was not going to think about what the term of endearment meant for him and instead focused on getting this over and done with, already he had been out here longer than he wanted.

"He hit my dog." Will said slowly as an idea started to form. "I want him to take the form of the creatures he abused, humiliated and dehumanised."

"So it will be done, dear Will."

Will tried to convince that the shiver that ran down his spine was from the cold and not arousal from the dark and lustful tone that Hannibal used. It then occurred to him that so long as he kept the Ripper interested in him the safer he would be.

Once finished they walked back to the parking lot in silence. The scene that they had left behind was burned into the back of Will's eyelids. It was simply magnificent. The evil Dog Groomer was stripped naked and forced onto all fours, generic rope that could be found from any and all hardware stores was wrapped around his neck in a mimicry of a collar. And the pièce de résistance was the broken branch that was shoved up the corpse's anus to act as a tail. There was nothing sexual about it. It was merely done to finish the depiction of a dog.

"I must ask whether that yellow monstrosity that you arrived in belongs to you?" Hannibal broke the silence as they reached the gravel parking lot.

"No, it is, or rather was the Dog Groomers." It brought up the question on how Will would be getting home. "I had planned on abandoning it here."

"Then let me wipe it down just to make sure that there is no evidence of your presence." Hannibal offered.

"I wouldn't say no to using your equipment for it, but I would prefer to be the one who does it." Will made sure to turn down the offer politely. From what he had gathered from Hannibal and his persona as the Chesapeake Ripper, was that he did not abide rudeness in any form.

“Very well.”

The entire time that Will was wiping down the inside of the car he felt Hannibal’s eyes on him with a dark intensity. When he felt that the car was free from any and all evidence that he had been inside it he stood back from the vehicle.

“I find myself curious, dear Will.” Hannibal spoke from behind him. “How exactly did you plan on returning home.”

Now this was tricky to answer. If he said that he had planned to walk then that would let the serial killer know that he lived close but if he said that he didn’t know or he planned to call a cab that would make him look like a fool.

“No matter.” The serial killer continued after Will did not answer. “I shall give you a lift and we can discuss the particulars of our alibis.”

Was he really going to accept a ride home from a serial killer? To let said serial killer know where he lived? Was seriously that stupid or insane?!

“Okay, thanks.” Apparently he was.

Rude

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It felt like some bizarre nightmare.

Will climbed into the passenger side of the Bentley and sunk into the heated seat. Hannibal climbed into the driver's seat and turned on the engine.

"Where to?"

Now here was yet another choice Will could make and change how his fate played out. He could give the man the name of a bar in the middle of high street in Baltimore and catch a cab back to his place. It would cost him an arm and a leg but then the Ripper wouldn't be made aware of where he lived so that was a plus. One the other hand he could give him his address.

Will gave Hannibal his address.

"Very well." They drove. "As for the alibis, how do you feel about being friends?"

"You were having dinner at my house." Will said slowly, his mind moving quickly. He had chosen to go along with the Ripper's desires on being each other's alibis despite the fact that he could claim that the Dog Groomer had been and gone by the time he had arrived home. "We've been friends for a few weeks and I invited you over to meet my dogs."

"How many dogs do you have?"

“I have six.”

There was a long stretch of silence.

“Tell me about them.” Hannibal finally sighed. “I suppose I am going to need to be able to at least name most of them if asked.”

“And get a little dog fur on you.” Will gleefully pointed out. He could tell that Hannibal was a bit of a clean freak. “After all, practically every surface in my home is covered in the stuff.” He delighted in the grimace that appeared on Hannibal’s face before he could hide it.

“So there are six.”

“Yes, Buster, Max, Jack, Harley, Ellie and Zoe.” He smiled as he thought about his dogs. “Buster is a real terror, he’s a Jack Russel Terrier and always full of energy. Max is a collie and has almost as much energy. Jack is a Mutt and I’m not sure of his heritage at all but I think he’s a cross between a Bull Terrier and a Collie at least. Harley is another mutt but has a lot of Pit Bull Terrier in him. Then There’s my old ladies: Ellie and Zoe. Ellie is a yorkipoo who is rather grumpy and Zoe is a small white terrier with an underbite. She’s adorable and the dog I’ve had the longest.”

“What, may I ask, is a yorkipoo?”

“It's a Yorkshire Terrier and Poodle cross.” Will couldn’t hide his amusement at the fact that the Ripper had just said ‘poo’. Was that childish of him? Yes. Did he care? After the night he was having? No, not at all.

It didn’t take long for them to arrive at Will’s Farm House. It looked rather rustic in the light of the Bentley’s headlights and Will felt the urge to lean over and turn them off.

“We should exchange numbers.” Hannibal suggested while pulling out his phone. It was clearly less of a suggestion and more of a demand.

Will was annoyed that he couldn’t think of any reason to deny him. He accepted Hannibal’s phone and handed over his own before adding his details to the man's contacts, then on a whim he deleted the photo that Hannibal had taken earlier. The man wouldn’t have evidence of Will’s presence at the crime scene anymore. He had a strong suspicion that the man was doing the same on Will’s phone, it certainly wouldn't surprise him. If anything he would be disappointed if the serial killer didn’t take the opportunity to get rid of the incriminating evidence.

“If the police come knocking, I will tell them that the Dog Groomer never arrived and when they ask whether I have anyone that can confirm where I was, I will mention that I had a friend over.” Will announced as they traded phones back. “They will likely ask for your details so that they can confirm my story.”

“Which I will of course confirm.” Hannibal nodded. “May I inquire as to what we would have had for dinner? I assume that you would have cooked?”

“Fish and uh.” He thought about what he would have made if he had caught some fish for the meal, which he would have done if he had a friend over. “Steak fries.”

“Freshly caught or frozen?” Was that disdain he could hear in Hannibal’s voice at the idea of frozen fish?”

“Freshly caught.”

“Good.”

They sat in silence for a few moments more, it was awkward but yet not at the same time? Will wasn’t sure why he hadn’t climbed out of the car yet.

“I’ll text you photos of my dogs with their names. If you’re my friend then you should be able to tell them apart.” He finally said before opening the car door. He probably didn’t need to send that much information to the man as the police weren’t exactly going to quiz him on Will’s dogs but he had a feeling that he would be seeing the man again and their fake friendship would be important later.

“Of course.” Hannibal nodded. “Have a good night.”

“Thanks, you too.” With that Will climbed out of the car and made his way up his porch. He watched as the Bentley pulled away and drove off before letting himself into his house, his dogs swarming him. It was a relief to be home and surrounded by his dogs. He felt exhausted now that the adrenaline was finally wearing off. He had killed a man. Displayed the body with the aid of the Chesapeak Ripper and even had said man’s number. It had been one hell of an evening.

Will was woken by the knocking on his front door. He squinted at his alarm clock and saw that it was barely half past six in the morning. He would have had to get up shortly anyway so he couldn’t just ignore the door. He groaned as he untangled himself from his sheets and climbed over Max and Harley that had snuck onto his bed during the night. He stumbled blearily to the door and opened it with a yawn. At the sight of two uniformed officers the events of the night before came rushing back.

“Officers?” Will hoped that his nerves were taken as surprise of finding the police at his door so early in the morning.

“Are you Mr Will Graham?” One asked.

“Yes, how can I help you?” His dogs at this point noticed that the door was open and surged past the three men to frolic in the yard. “Ah sorry, I’ve just woken and haven’t had a chance to let them out until now.” He apologised sheepishly at the looks of astonishment on their faces at the number of dogs.

“That’s alright.” The other officer reassured him with a smile. “We’re sorry for appearing so early but we have some questions we would like to ask you.”

“Oh, would you like to come in?” Will offered. “It's a bit of a mess but would be more comfortable than standing out in the cold.” God, he never knew that he could be so polite before his coffee in the morning. Disgusting.

“No that’s alright this shouldn’t take long.”

“Did you have an appointment with Mr Ronald Weston yesterday evening?”

“Yes but he didn’t turn up.” Will sighed. “I planned on calling him this morning to find out what happened and if unable to reschedule then at least ask for a refund.”

“Have you employed his services before?”

“Yes, it's easier to have a dog groomer to come to me than drag this lot down to them.” Will gestured at the pack of dogs that were running around.”

“Understandable.” The first officer smiled at the sight.

“Where were you last night between 7 and 10pm?”

“Here, I had a friend over for dinner.” Will frowned. “I’m sorry but has something happened to him? And am I being accused of something?”

“His body was found late last night.”

“Well,” Will paused awkwardly. “I think I’ll forgo trying to get a refund.” He tried to joke but it fell flat.

“We’re going to need your friend's details to confirm your story.” The officers were suddenly a lot less friendly. Damn it does no one appreciate black humour these days?

“Of course.” Will grabs his phone from where he left it near the door last night and reads out Hannibal’s phone number. “His name is Dr Hannibal Lecter.”

“Thank you for your time.” The officer writing down the information says when he is finished. “But please do not leave town.”

“Sure.”

Once the police officers have left, Will calls his dogs back in to feed them and himself. It's a Saturday so he doesn’t have lectures to give and other than housework his day is free. As his dogs eat from bowls with their names on he snaps a photo and before he can change his mind he sends it to Hannibal. He also checks his photos to find that the photographic evidence from the night before had indeed been deleted.

He takes all six of his dogs out for a walk. It's cold so he’s wrapped up warm but forgoes wearing gloves so it's easier to pick up and throw sticks. It also means that he won’t have to wash said gloves to get rid of the dog drool that transferred from the sticks. Once he had exhausted his dogs and got them back into the house Will decided that he needed to buy some groceries.

It didn’t feel real. None of this felt real. He had killed someone last night and yet here he was looking at vegetables in a supermarket the morning after. It was surreal. He filled his trolley with all the food he needed: veg, fruit, rice, boxes of macaroni etc before heading to the checkouts.

Will had just reached a checkout with a line that wasn’t too long when he was shouldered to the side and his space taken.

“Excuse me?” Will almost snarled as he straightened his trolley. “Was that really necessary?”

“You snooze, you lose.” Came the arrogant response.

Will’s grip on his trolley tightened until his knuckles went white. He joined a different queue but was silently fuming the entire time. How dare that man shove him in order to go in that line for the checkout. He ground his teeth in anger and wished that he had a knife or maybe a gun. He wanted to kill that man, he was so *rude* .

He froze.

Wh-what was wrong with him?! He shouldn't want a man to die just because he was rude. That was a bit extreme. Killing a man because he hit his dog is one thing, but killing another because he shoved in front of him at the supermarket was a different story altogether. But the worse thing was that he didn’t feel guilty about his thoughts, he only felt guilty because he didn’t feel guilty. He paid and went home in a daze. He had never realised that he could be so cold. Sure he’s always been a surly bastard but never malicious or cruel so why didn’t he feel bad about wanting to kill people?

Because it felt just.

He arrived home and after putting his shopping away he lay down on his living room floor and let his dogs smother him. He needed their weight to remind him that he was real, that this was real and everything that had happened was real and not just occurring in his head. The smell of dog fur meant home and he relaxed under their attention.

It was only when they wanted to go out that Will finally dragged himself up from the floor.

“All right, all right.” He laughed, now in a much better mood. “Out you go.” He opened the door and watched as they raced out, Little old Zoe taking up the rear. She wasn’t as fast as the others in her old age. He drank a cup of coffee as he watched them with a smile when his phone went off with a text message alert.

Hannibal: Thank you for the photo.

Hannibal: The police contacted me this morning about your dog groomer, I’m sorry for your loss.

Hannibal: Would you like me to help you find a new one?

Will stared down at his phone and wondered what the hell he had gotten into before sighing and replying. Like he thought last night: The longer he kept the serial killer interested in him, the less likely he was going to be killed.

Will: The dog groomer would have to make home visits.

Hannibal: I will ask around and see if anyone would be willing to do so.

Hannibal: To pay you back for dinner at your place last night, would you do me the honor of allowing me to host you for dinner this coming Thursday?

Will sighed again and decided not to respond straight away. He already knew that he was going to accept the invite, after all it would even the playing field if he got to know where the other man lived but that didn't mean that he wanted the man to think that was eager to spend time with him.

He played with his dogs, fixed up an old motor he had stored in his barn and finally when he was sitting down to eat a meal of box macaroni and cheese, he replied.

Will: Send me the address and I'll be there. What time? Do I need to bring anything?

Hannibal replied almost immediately.

Hannibal: 8 o'clock sharp and just bring yourself.

Hannibal: I'll send you my address closer to the time.

Will: Sounds good.

He had a dinner date with a serial killer.

Friends For Dinner

The rest of the weekend and the time leading up to dinner with Hannibal passed quickly in its usual dull fashion. Nothing came of the police investigation into Ronald Weston's death. Will presumed that the second body probably threw them off Will's tail. He was however reluctant to admit this as it put him further into Hannibal's debt.

It was rather surreal to be teaching about killers and how they think when he was now a killer. He found it easier and easier to slip into their mind frames and harder to get out of them. He had taken to snapping a rubber band around his left wrist to snap him out of it. He found that it worked by accident during his first lecture that Monday morning when he got a little lost in Ted Bundy's head.

He had a rubber band around his wrist from the hand outs that he gave out at the start of the lecture. The band caught on his chair as he was pacing and snapped back when he changed directions. The sudden sharp pain grounded him and brought him back to his body and more importantly his own mind. It was a little bit too much like self harm for his liking but until he figured out a better method, it was going to have to do. The last thing he wanted to do was getting lost inside a killer's mind while he was in the FBI college.

So the days until the fateful dinner with the serial killer passed quickly until Will was standing awkwardly in front of the man’s home in Baltimore. It was a rather impressive looking house and was probably worth more than he earnt in a year for just its upkeep. In his hands he clutched a rather expensive red wine. Sure Hannibal said not to bring anything but it would be simply rude to show up without something. Will didn’t know much about wine but a quick google revealed that La Rioja Alta Gran Reserva 904 2016 was a pretty good bottle. It was a little expensive but he was sure that he would appreciate it.

Will had googled the good Doctor. Doctor Hannibal Lecter was a surgeon before becoming a psychiatrist and was a leading figure in Baltimore’s high society. He was often on the front page of the society pages, usually seen alone or with another well dressed patron of the arts at all sorts of gallas, operas and plays. He was a predator among the sheep, a wolf in sheep’s clothing as it were. And Will was likely the only one who knew and lived. To keep himself alive he would play whatever game Hannibal had in mind but at the same time he didn't think that the man would want him to be a mindless puppet. He needed to find the right balance, to stay alive.

Hannibal opened the door exact twenty five seconds after Will had finally worked up the nerve to knock on it. He was dressed stupendously in a dark blue plaid suit. Was this man always so formal even in his own home? Will felt under dressed.

"Will." Hannibal greeted him with a small staged smile. It was the same smile that the man wore in those society page photos. "I'm glad you were able to make it."

"I know you said not to bring anything but…" Will trailed off and held the bottle of wine out in front of him.

"Oh." He blinked in surprise as he took the expensive bottle from Will and stepped back so he could enter. " La Rioja Alta Gran Reserva 904 2016, very well done Will. This is an excellent wine."

"Don't thank me, thank Google."

"Here let me take your coat." Hannibal placed the bottle on the hallway table and then helped Will out of his coat. It was such a weirdly old timey fashioned thing to do and Will couldn't help but be charmed. Which was most likely the reason that Doctor Lecter did it.

“You have a lovely home.” Will found himself falling back onto the standard guest script for a lack of anything else to say. It wasn’t as if it was a lie either. The entrance hall was rather grand with a high ceiling, dark wood flooring, the walls were half and half. The lower half of the walls had a white wooden paneling while the top half was painted a calming light blue. There was a chandelier esk light fitting filling the entrance hall with a brilliant but not blinding white light. It was all very posh and it suited the serial killer.

“Thank you.” Hannibal seemed genuinely pleased by the compliment. “This way to the dining room, dinner will be ready shortly.”

Will allowed Hannibal to guide him into the dining room, his large and warm on his lower back, exerting only enough pressure to guide him and no more. He put it down as yet another thing the doctor did to be charming and probably did it to all his guests.

“Interesting.” Will commented as he scanned the room. It was quite unlike any dining room he had ever been in.

On one side was a herb garden, climbing up the wall as if the room opened out into a garden, the rest of the room was covered in wooden molding. The wooden molding was stained a deep indigo giving it the look of a night sky, the effect made the room rather dark but it was lit by an antler shaped light fixture that dangled in the center of the room over the long dark dining table. At the far end of the room above a dark, unlit fireplace was the rather indecent painting of ‘Leda and the Swan’.

“Take a seat, and I will bring the food out shortly.” Hannibal gestured to one of the chairs which had a cutlery and a napkin set out.

“Sure.” Will took his seat while Hannibal disappeared.

Hannibal was quick to return with two plates of food. The smell reached Will first and his stomach rumbled in response.

“It smells delicious.” He commented as the plate was put before him. It looked to be some kind of meat dish? There was a dark sauce covering it so he couldn’t tell what meat it was.

“Coq au Vin.” Hannibal announced as he poured the wine that Will had brought. “A French dish of chicken braised with wine, lardons, mushrooms and garlic.”

“Well if it tastes as good as it looks and smells then count me very impressed.” Will commented as he accepted his glass.

“Bon appetit.”

As Will took his first mouthful of the meet he realised that he wasn't eating chicken. The ripper takes organs from his victims. What he knew of Hannibal did not suggest that he was keeping them as trophies...the man was eating them. He gazed down at his plate as he chewed his mouthful. He swallowed. Dr. Hannibal Lecter, the Chesapeak Ripper, was a cannibal.

"Do you feed all of your guests, human flesh?" He asked as he ate another bite of the 'chicken'. He grew up with sparse food and hated to waste any, even if it was made from humans. He watched Hannibal's chin as the man digested his words.

"Oh you are brilliant."

"So that's a yes then." Will pointed out dryly.

Hannibal just gave him a small smile and continued to eat. They ate the rest of the meal in a comfortable silence. Will cleared his plate. Sure, he was technically a cannibal now as well but damn it that man could cook! So far so good. Will seemed to be keeping the man interested in him. The more interesting he made himself the less likely he was going to become dinner.

It was as they were eating dessert, some kind of French fancy name for fruit, meringue and ice cream, that Hannibal started up another conversation.

"How do you feel about classical art?" He asked as he scented his wine.

"As in stuff like Leda?" Will pointed his spoon at the painting hung on the wall across the room. "It's okay I guess. I don't really think about it."

"If you are amiable, I would like it if you would accompany me to the opening of a new exhibit at the Baltimore Museum of Art, next Saturday evening."

Will paused his eating and looked at Hannibal, really looked at him. The man's marron, almost red in this light, eyes were focused on Will's face. He was leaning forward in his seat

slightly to seem more engaging as if he was eager for Will's response. Would the man be disappointed if Will gave in too easily? If he just said yes? Probably.

"Will I be acting as your alibi for the evening?" He asked instead of saying 'yes' or 'no'.

"Indeed, I will need you to spend the night in my guest room." There was a smirk playing around the man's lips.

Will groaned, his face heating as he realised what the implications of what Hannibal wanted to let others think. "Am I right in thinking that you wish to portray us as a couple?"

"Why, what an excellent idea." The man smiled with a little too much teeth. "It can be our first date."

"I'm sorry Dr Lecter, but I don't put out on a first date and I would hate for your friends to think that I'm easy." Will shot back as his mind ran through several options. He could agree to this farce and it would also work in his advantage in case Will needed an alibi of his own again. Or he could say no. If he did say no though what would Hannibal do in response? Work harder to get Will to agree? Or accept it and start planning his death?

"Well in that case my dear, are you free tomorrow night?"

"Tomorrow?"

"Yes, if your only objection to the new exhibit is merely because you don't wish to be known as 'easy'." He grimaced as he said the last word and Will struggled to keep a straight face. It was odd to hear the man use such a phrase. Sure he didn't know Hannibal very well yet but it was clear just by the way that presented himself that he was very proper. "Then I merely have to take you in public before the opening."

This was starting to sound like a lot of effort for a fake relationship but if it kept Hannibal interested enough in him to keep him alive then so be it.

“Alright, I’m free tomorrow after six. It’ll take me an hour to get home, plus twenty minutes to get ready and then another hour to drive into baltimore. So say half past eight?” Will gave in.

“Half eight it is. I’ll make reservations and text you the restaurant’s details later.” Will tried not to scowl at the rather smug look on his face.

“It's a date.”

The next evening came faster than Will would have liked. He only had two suits and one of which he had worn to the dinner with Hannibal last night. He sighed as he realised that he would need to invest in more of the blasted things if Hannibal was going to keep using him as an alibi and take him out to fancy places. Maybe he could convince the man to go fishing with him for their second date?

He froze at the thought. What was wrong with him? This was supposed to be a fake relationship so there was no need to go places with each other if it wasn’t going to be in public. So fishing was out unless they were going to go to a very public spot, which if they did then the fish were probably shit. He shouldn’t be wanting to spend time with a serial killing cannibal.

He threw on his second suit and after making sure that the dogs had enough food, he called them back in from outside and got them settled for the evening before he finally left. He couldn’t take too long otherwise he would be late and that would be rude and as Hannibal eats the rude…

Thankfully he arrived at the restaurant in time. The restaurant was the Charleston, a high end restaurant which google rated highly. It had very good reviews but a glance at the online menus showed that each course was at least $28. It was going to be hell on his bank account. It did however serve southern food as well as the posh French stuff. Will couldn’t help but feel touched at the choice.

Will walked into the restaurant and gave Hannibal's name for the reservation.

"Right this way sir." The hostess smiled falsely at him before guiding him to a table at the back of the restaurant. A quick glance was all it took for Will to know that she was working here to pay her way through university, she was new and wasn't used to wearing high heels. Her feet hurt. He blinked and tore himself away from her mind and fiddled with his glasses, eyes on the floor.

"Will." Hannibal's voice brought his gaze up from the floor. Will had been taken to a table with a view of the Baltimore port. The lighting was just so, so they could still see the water even in the dark of the night.

"Hannibal." Will greeted his fake boyfriend in kind as he took a seat.

"Do you have any wine preferences?" Hannibal asked as he retook his seat and picked up the wine menu.

"Not really, I'm more of a whiskey drinker."

"Then I shall choose for us if that's alright?"

"Sounds good." Will fiddled with the cutlery on the table feeling awkward. Somehow this dinner felt more stiff and uncomfortable than the one they had shared the night before at the Ripper's house.

"We'll have the Domaine de Chevalier (Pessac-Léognan) 2009," Hannibal told the sommelier who had lurked near their table once he had seen that Will had sat down.

"Very good sir."

"So," Will started as he opened the menu. "Have been here before?"

“Yes, for meetings with colleagues.”

“Wow, and I thought going to Wendy’s with the other lectures was high end.” He joked.

“Your wine, sirs.” The sommelier was back. “Would you like to sample it first?”

“Please.” Hannibal accepted a glass with two fingers of wine. He agitated the wine gently by swirling the glass and sniffed the wine before taking a sip. He had never seen someone look so elegant when testing wine. It was absurd. Will was too absorbed in watching him to notice that he was being offered the same. “Perfect, we’ll take it.”

“Very good sir,” The sommelier then refilled Hannibal’s glass and it was then that Will noticed that he had been given one as well. Oops. He sheepishly handed the glass over to get it topped up before he had a sip.

It was very fruity, the fruitiest white wine Will had ever drunk but it wasn’t bad. He still preferred whiskey. Once the sommelier left Will turned his attention to the menu despite already having decided what he would order.

“What are you thinking of having?” Hannibal asked as he glanced at his own menu. “And don’t worry about the price, its my treat.”

“What, no.” Will instantly protested. “I thought we would be going dutch?”

“Of course not.” Hannibal wrinkled his nose. “It's a date and as I was the one to ask you to dinner, I will be the one to pay.”

“But-”

“No buts.”

Will sighed, but told him what he had planned to order. “I like the look of the cornmeal fried oysters.” It wasn’t the cheapest option on the menu but was definitely not the most expensive either.

“An excellent choice.” Hannibal nodded approvingly “And for your other two courses?. “I will be having the pan seared sea scallops followed by the pan roasted wild Chesapeake Bay rockfish and the bittersweet chocolate tart for dessert.”

“Three courses?” Will repeated in disbelief. This was going to cost the man an arm and a leg.

“Yes.” Hannibal gave him a stern look that suggested that he would not take no for an answer and that he would order for Will if he had to.

“All right.” He sighed and reopened the menu. “I’ll have the cornmeal fried oysters followed by the...grilled Scottish salmon and as for dessert...the sticky toffee pudding.”

“Very good, Will.” Hannibal smiled pleased before signalling for a waiter and gave their orders.

They sat in silence for a little bit after their orders had been given. Will just didn’t know what to say. What do you talk about to the man that helped you hide a murder, was your alibi and a serial killer himself?

“So, tell me about yourself, Will.” Hannibal broke the silence. “You mentioned that you were a lecturer?”

“I teach at the FBI college.” Will said wryly. He was starting to notice that Hannibal liked saying his name. The man seemed to try and slip into every sentence aimed at him. “I teach Criminal profiling specifically.”

“What drew you to that field of study?”

“I was originally a cop in New Orleans.” Will sighed. “I got stabbed and then when I tried to apply to be an agent for the FBI I didn’t pass the psych eval.” He summed up his professional life simply. “So as the saying goes, those that can’t do, teach.”

“Why did you decide to be a cop in the first place?” Hannibal asked at the time that their first course arrived.

“Thank you,” Will thanked the waiter and picked up his cutlery. “Well, I have an empathy disorder,” This will keep him interested, Will thought. “I can empathise with anyone. And I thought it would be useful in catching the bad guys.” He hated how juvenile that sounded but it was true.

“And was it?”

“It was as helpful as it was problematic.” He grimaced as he thought back on his time as a cop. “I wasn’t very good at keeping myself removed from the crimes and it eventually came to ahead when I wasn’t able to pull the trigger on the knife wielding thief. I knew that they were stealing the money to put their daughter through college and in my distraction he stabbed me.” He touched his shoulder. He remembered that night clearly and his old wound throbbed at the reminder. He shook the memory away. “Anyway, enough about me, what caused the change from surgeon to psychiatrist?”

Hannibal allowed the subject change and Will tried not to let the fact that he hadn’t responded to Will’s back story. He could feel the man’s eyes on him the entire time he had spoken but he had not given the usual response of ‘I’m sorry to hear that’ or ‘Is your shoulder alright now? Or even ‘well maybe it's a good thing that you’re no longer in the field?” That last one came from Dr Alana Bloom.

“I killed someone.” He took a sip of his wine. “Or rather I wasn’t able to save someone.”

“I read that you were an ER surgeon so surely you had lost patients before?” Will pointed out. “Although I did find that you had the highest success rate.” He also really doubted that was the true reason, the man was after all a serial killer. It was however, not something he should point out in public.

“Then perhaps, a better way to phrase it is that I felt that I lost too many patients. As a psychiatrist, I have yet to have a patient die on me.” He smirked.

“You’ll have to tell me more about it later.” Will gave him a pointed look making it clear that he did not believe that he was telling the truth.

“Of course.” Hannibal nodded graciously. “How is the food?”

“It's delicious but not as good as yours.” He admitted and what did that say about him? That he preferred a meal where the meat was human to this delicious fish?

“You flatter me, Will.”

“Humbleness doesn’t suit you.”

The other man laughed quietly. “Perhaps, but it would be rude to be boastful, no?”

“Heaven forbid,” Will rolled his eyes.

The rest of the meal passed with pleasant light conversation and sooner than expected the meal was over and Hannibal was walking Will back to his car.

“I had a wonderful time, Will.”

“Me too.” Will replied truthfully. “There’s a nice public fishing spot that I like to frequent.” his mouth moved without his agreement. Damn it. This is a fake relationship, fake! He reminded himself but it was too late, the implied invitation was already out there.

“That sounds lovely. Is this Sunday good for you?”

Will realised that the man was taking advantage of the invite to get in another ‘date’ before the exhibit opening.

“Yeah, Sunday is good. Meet at mine for 11am?”

“It’s a date.” Hannibal repeated the same words that Will had uttered last night only he added something a little extra.

Will felt the warmth on the corner of his mouth before he saw Hannibal move back and realized that the man had kissed him. It was only a brush of lips on the corner of his mouth but that still counted right? Right?!

“Good night, Will.”

“Night.” He croaked back and as he climbed into his car he had to remind himself once more that this was fake. “We’re not really dating.” He said aloud in the car. “Its a fake relationship.”

But did people in fake relationships kiss?

Casting the Line

As usual Will woke rather early on a not so bright Saturday morning. The trees surrounding his farm house didn't exactly let much light through this late in the year. His dogs were stirring too and he knew that they would want to go out shortly before begging for food. He groaned before climbing out of bed and letting the dogs out the front.

He downed awful instant coffee before getting the dogs breakfast ready. He would make do with toast after they had eaten. Zoe was one of the first dogs back in and Will cooed at her as she shuffled around him begging for food.

"Who's a good girl?" He cooed bending down to pet her. "Who's a good girl? You are, yes you are!" She huffed cutely and rolled over. "Oh, such a good puppy."

The rest of the dogs poured in and he made sure to fuss over all of them telling them what good boys and girls they were before putting down their food. He fed them better than himself. Made their food from scratch even while he ate dry toast and choked down bitter coffee that was only good for keeping him awake.

"Now, I will be out for most of the morning if not longer guys," Will told his dogs as they chowed down. "I'll be getting some suits. I know, I know. I don't usually wear suits but this guy I know is very fancy and will be taking me to lots of high end places." He sighed and sat on the floor to pet the closest dog which happened to be Buster. "It's for fake dates but I don't want to show him up, that would be rude and well…" He grimaced. "He eats the rude."

He stood up, groaning as his knees popped. He was getting too old to be crouching on the floor with his dogs. He stretched, letting out a heavy sigh when he had finished and smiled down at his dogs.

"Be good for me okay? And wish me luck. I'm going to need it."

The tailor's that Will settled on had been given good reviews on google: *Fabian's Tailors* . It wasn't overly expensive but did produce good quality suits. It's not what he really wanted to spend a lot of money on but he wasn't strapped for cash either. His scientific papers made a lot of money and that was on top of his salary as a professor at the FBI college and the money he made with fixing boats on occasions. So he had enough money for a couple of nice suits. He would also need to get some good shirts, ties and well he also needed new dress shoes as well. His wallet would be crying by the end of the day and honestly, so was he.

A small bell jingled as Will opened the door to *Fabian's Tailor.* It was mainly just one large room with finished, half finished and suit materials draped/hung up everywhere. It also smelled strong of pompuri and Will made a mental note to have whatever he bought he dried cleaned before he wore it. He would rather not smell like a grandmother's wardrobe, thank you very much.

"Ah welcome." A tall lithe man looked up from the counter. His hair was dark and cut close to his head and he unsurprisingly wore a suit. "You must be Mr Graham? I'm Fabian, the owner and Head Tailor of this establishment."

"Yes," Will replied shortly. He had had to make an appointment and had only been able to be seen due to a last minute cancellation. There was however something about this man that rubbed him up the wrong way. He didn't want to look too closely though, it was bad enough that he had killers in his head, he didn't need random strangers in there too.

"Excellent, if you come this way then we'll get started on your measurements and then we can discuss what it is you are looking for exactly." The tailor pointed to a small platform further into the shop.

Will took his place on the platform and stood uncomfortably still as Fabian measured him with a measuring tape. He stood stiffly as the man got far too close. Warm hands stroked over his shoulders, rould his ribs, all in the guise of taking measurements. He grimaced but kept silent. The sooner the man got the measurements to the sooner he would stop touching him.

Will changed his mind about speaking up when the man groped his crotch.

"Hey!" He threw himself backwards away from the man's grabby hands. "What the hell do you think you are doing?!"

“Relax, Mr Graham.” Fabian had a smarmy smile on his face. “I am merely measuring you. The more precise the details the better the suit will fit.”

“And that involves groping my junk?!” Will was in half a mind to tell Hannibal about how rude this man was. That brought him up short. He hated that this man was groping him but did he deserve to die?

“The measurements need to be precise.” Fabian repeated and then smirked. “I need to make sure that the suit trousers don’t cling when you get aroused.”

Okay that was it. He wanted this man dead.

“I think I’ll be getting my suits from somewhere else.” Will curled his lip in disgust and made his way to the door. “I will make sure to leave you a bad review.” He called over his shoulder as he left, reaching for his phone.

“You’ll regret that, Mr Graham.” Fabian shouted after him. “My suits are the best!”

Will ignored him and left the store. He sent a text to Hannibal.

Will: Do you know a good tailor that won’t grope me when measuring for a suit?

Hannibal: Good morning to you too.

Hannibal: I would recommend Michael Schafer Clothier. I will give him a call personally and see when he can fit you in.

Will: thanks. I might need to just get a premade suit for the exhibit at this rate. I refuse to be felt up again. Apparently, the tailor needed to grope my crotch to make sure that the trousers would be a perfect fit.

Will put his phone back in his pocket and decided to go to a local clothes shop to get his shirts. He crossed the road and immediately bumped into Alana Bloom. She looked resplendent in a white jeans and a flattering pink shirt.

“Will.” She said slightly breathless.

“Alana.” He was confused as to why she was out of breath.

“I saw you leaving Fabian’s and rushed to catch up.” ah that would explain it. “Anyway um, I wanted to ask how you were, we haven’t spoken in a while.”

“I’m good, great actually.” Will rocked on his heels, hands in his pockets as he looked past her ear. It was weird to be talking to her after all this time. She had made a point not to be alone in a room with him for the last few months which he didn’t understand. He couldn’t think of any reasons why she was so cautious around him.

“Really? Thats uh good,” She sounded so surprised. “What were you doing buying a suit?” What was with all these questions Alana? Although, Will supposed, he should mention that he’s dating someone. The more people who were aware of it the better an alibi it would be.

“Yeah, I’ve met someone.”

“Oh?” She sounded disappointed so Will took a risk and glanced at her face and instantly regretted it. She was disappointed that he was in a relationship, that he didn’t like her like that. Sure she didn’t want to date him but she also didn’t like the idea of him dating someone else.

“Yeah.” He shrugged

“So who is she? And how did you meet?” Damn he should have asked Hannibal about what they were going to say if someone asked how they met.

“Uh, they’re a he.” He pointed out awkwardly. “And we kind of just bumped into each other and started talking.”

“And? Tell me more.” She demanded and Will had never felt more awkward. He really didn’t want to be grilled about his love life in the middle of the street but the edge to her voice told him that he wasn’t getting out of this.

“Um, his name is Dr Hannibal Lecter and he-”

“Hannibal?” She exclaimed. “You’re dating Hannibal?”

“Oh you now of him?” Will was a bit taken aback by her surprise.

“Know of him? He was my mentor at John Hopkins.”

“Huh, small world.”

“Indeed.”

They stood awkwardly for a little longer before Will decided he had enough. He was already exhausted from being assaulted by that blasted tailor and he still had lots to do.

“Well, it was nice seeing you but I’ve got some errands so…”

“Ah, right. Of course.” Alana nodded flushing. “I’m really happy for you.” Lie.

“Thanks.” Will quirked his lips in a mimic of a smile before ducking past her and continuing on to the shop that he had been on his way to before he had run into her. As he stepped inside he felt his phone go off in his pocket.

Hannibal: Michael can fit you in later this afternoon at 3pm. I'll send you the address.

Hannibal: Are you alright?

Wow that was quick. Will was impressed that Hannibal was able to get him an appointment so last minute

Will: Thank you.

Will: I'm impressed that you got me an appointment on such short notice.

Will: I'm okay, if I didn't have other errands to run I would have gone home to shower. I am definitely leaving a bad review on google.

Hannibal: It was no trouble. Will the errands not hold for another day? You shouldn't force yourself after what you just went through. Which tailor was it?

Now, here Will had a choice to make. Did he tell Hannibal, the Cheseapeak Ripper, the name of tailor and basically sign the man's death warrant or did he just shrug it off and merely leave a strongly worded review?

Will had never said that he was a good man.

Will: I need to get some more things If I want to make sure that I don't embarrass you at the exhibit opening.

Will: It was the Head Tailor from Fabian's Tailors. His name was Fabian.

As he waited for a reply he looked around the shop and found some nice dress shirts. He got half a dozen in various colours and picked out some ties. He was very tempted by a navy tie with little tiny dogs on it. It was expensive but it was very cute. After dithering for a moment he decided to get it. He deserved that cute tie after the morning he had.

His phone buzzed again as he was paying for his shopping. He waited until he was out of the shop to look at it.

Hannibal: You could never embarrass me. Think no more of the tailor.

Hannibal: Do you still wish to go fishing tomorrow? We could cancel if you want

Will: And miss the chance of seeing you in waders? Never.

Will: I'll be okay, thank you and honestly fishing would only improve my mood.

Hannibal: In that case I look forward to seeing you tomorrow.

The second trip to the tailors went so much better than the first. Michael had been very professional and although the speed order to get a suit ready for the exhibit was a bit expensive it was worth it.

When Hannibal pulled up to his house early on the Sunday morning, Will was more than ready to get in the water. He had dug out his spare fishing rod and waders. He had all his gear ready including the bait and lures.

"Good morning." Hannibal greeted as he climbed out of his car to find Will waiting for him on his porch.

"Morning." Will smiled. "I figured that we would take my car."

"I must say that I am feeling a little excited for this." Hannibal confessed as he approached Will's car. "I don't think I have ever been fishing. I'm more of a hunter." He grinned showing off his sharp teeth.

"I think you'll like it." Will said as he put the equipment into the car. "At the very least I will enjoy seeing you in something as inelegant as waders."

Hannibal just chuckled lightly and got into the car.

Will drove them to the popular fishing spot that he had mentioned. There were already quite a few people at the lake when they arrived. Will led Hannibal to a spot that wasn't overly crowded but still in full view of everyone.

"Okay, here we are." Will dropped his tackle box to the grass. "You'll need to put these on." He handed Hannibal a set of waders.

"Of course." Somehow Hannibal still looked elegant when putting on the cumbersome waders. It shouldn't be possible but the man was able to make them look attractive too.

It's a fake relationship, fake! Will chanted in his mind as the man swept his silver streaked blond hair from his face. God, no one should be that attractive. He swallowed and hastily looked away.

"Right." He cleared his throat. "I'll show you how to load your bait and then we can wade out into the water." He focused on the task at hand and tried not to think about how heavy and focused Hannibal's eyes were on him. Hannibal was of course a fast learner.

Soon they were in the water and Will was demonstrating how to cast a line. For all that Hannibal was an excellent hunter and fairly decent at loading bait, he was a terrible fisherman.

"Okay no." Will snickered as Hannibal's line lay limply in the water. "You're doing it wrong."

"I'm doing what you told me." Was he pouting? "I'm swinging it in the loop formation you showed me."

“You’re really not.”

“I am.”

“No,” Will shook his head and trudged through the water to reach Hannibal. “The way that your casting causes the line to collapse on itself.”

“Show me again then?”

“Here, I’ll do you one better.” Will stepped up close behind the cannibal. “I’ll help you cast.”

“Alright.”

“Firstly, you’re holding the rod wrong.” Will reached around the man to adjust his grip. He tried not to focus on how much taller and broader Hannibal was. “Then you lift the rod and…” He guided him through the motions, ignoring the flexing of the rather firm muscles under his hands. “There we go.” The line was cast successfully. “Now you just keep a steady hand and wait for something to bite.”

“Thank you Will.” Hannibal turned his head, his breath grazing Will’s face.

“N-no problem.” Will stuttered before stepping back.

They didn’t catch anything but Will did have to help Hannibal cast his line a couple more times.

“If I didn't know better I would say that you were deliberately doing it wrong.” He laughed as he tried to untangle the fishing line from Hannibal’s latest attempt.

“It's harder than you make it look.” Hannibal tried to explain. “And you didn’t catch anything either.

“It’s fine.” Will grinned, pleased that he was able to do something that the cannibal couldn’t. The man struck him as someone who excelled at everything he put his mind to, so for him not to succeed at fishing...well it was freaking hilarious. “I knew we wouldn’t catch anything here.”

“Oh?”

“It's too popular and crowded. It scares the fish.”

“Then why is it popular?” Hannibal looked perplexed.

“Because it's a nice piece of open water and the land owners occasionally restock the fish and if you’re lucky you’ll catch some before everyone else does.”

“That makes no sense.” He complained as they made it back onto land. “Why fish where there is such a small chance of catching anything?”

“It's all about the experience rather than the result.” The droll look that Hannibal gave him almost set Will off into cackles. “Okay okay. I have a more private place that I like to fish where I actually catch fish.”

“Now, that makes sense.” Hannibal nodded sagely. “And by keeping it private the fish are less likely to be scared off.”

“Sure.” Will smiled and shook his head. It would seem that the man had forgotten that Will had only taken him fishing here in a public space as ‘date’ so he wouldn’t look cheap to Hannibal’s friends. Although it had occurred to him that they could just lie.

They struggled out of their waders and Will took them back to his place so that Hannibal could pick up his car.

“I hope today wasn’t too boring for you.” Will asked as he hung up the waders to dry.

“Not at all.” Hannibal lent against his own car. “I found it very educational.”

“Good.” Will bit his lip nodding. He wasn’t sure what to say next.

“I’ll see you on saturday.” Hannibal pushed off his car and took the five steps that were separating them. Will froze as the man entered his personal space to speak quietly in his ear. “And don’t worry about that tailor. I have it all sorted.”

“Do you need another alibi?” Will asked in the same quiet voice.

“No, don’t worry. I have it all sorted.” Then with a quick brush of lips against Will’s cheek, once more far too close his mouth, the man left.

“Fake dating, Will, you’re fake dating.” Will muttered out loud as he walked into his house only to be swarmed by his dogs.

'Bring your Significant Other to Work' Day

Will had finished his lecture on the Marlow Family murders when he noticed a man stood in the cleared out lecture hall. He quickly put his glasses on as the man approached.

“I’m Special Agent Jack Crawford.” The man came to a stop in front of Will’s podium. “I lead the Behavioural Science Unit.” Ah yes, Will remembered him.

“We’ve met.”

“Yes, we had a disagreement about the museum when we opened it.”

“I disagreed with what you named it.”

“The Evil Minds Research Museum?”

“It's a little hammy Jack.” It was a really terrible name, couldn’t they have called it something else? Like, The Study of Evil Museum? Wait no, that was just as bad. Will sighed and fiddled with the elastic band around his wrist. He thankfully hadn’t needed to use it today. He was getting better at not getting stuck in the minds of the killers that he lectured about.

Jack smiled at how direct Will was and thankfully got to the point of his visit. “I heard that you can empathise with narcissists and sociopaths”

“I can emphasise with anyone Jack.” Will narrowed his eyes at the man. He had a feeling that he knew where this was going. “Less to do with personality disorders than an active imagination.”

Jack smiled and leant closer. “Can I borrow your imagination?”

He frickin' knew it.

"What's the case?" Will sighed pushing his glasses up on his nose. He may officially be a killer but he still had a damn saviour complex.

"Eight girls from eight different Minnesota campuses have been abducted in the last eight months." Jack told him as they walked to his office. Oh that case.

"Eight? I thought there were only seven."

"There were."

"When did you tag the eighth?" Will wished that the man would just give him the information instead of making him ask for every detail.

"About three minutes before I walked into your lecture hall."

"You're calling them "abductions" because you have no bodies?" The girls were most likely dead, they just hadn't found the bodies yet.

"We have nothing. No bodies. No parts of bodies. Nothing that comes out of a body. We have lonely swabs in used evidence kits."

"Then those girls weren't taken from where you think they were taken."

"Where were they taken from?" Jack asked as they came to a stop outside of his office.

"I don't know. Someplace else." He shrugged. Work it yourself, Will wanted to shout. This was the so-called lead of behavioural sciences and yet Will was left disappointed.

In Jack's office there is a map of Minnesota with seven blue squares dotted on the map corresponding with seven photos of the missing girls. Will walks up close to examine the photos as Jack talks.

"All abducted on a Friday so they're not reported missing until Monday. However he's covering his tracks. He needs the weekend to do it." Jack tacs an eighth blue square to the map and hands Will a Senior Prom portrait.

"Number eight?" He asked with a raised eyebrow. She looked just like all the other girls.

"Elise Nichols. St. Cloud State in Mississippi. Disappeared Friday. Supposed to house sit for her parents over the weekend. Feed their cat. Never made it home."

"One through seven are dead, don't you think? He's not keeping them around. Got himself a new one." Come on Jack surely you've thought of this.

Jack hummed in agreement. "We're focusing on Elise Nichols." Good, so he's not totally useless.

"They all look like 'Mall of America'. That's a lot of wind-chafed skin."

"Same hair color. Same eye color. Roughly the same age, height, weight. What is it about all these girls?" He agreed.

"It's not about all of these girls. It's about one of them." Will pinned the photo of Elise Nichols next to her blue square. "He's like Willy Wonker. Every girl he takes is a chocolate bar." He tapped the map as he thought. "Hidden amongst all those candy bars is the one, true intended victim, which if we follow through on the metaphor, would be your Golden Ticket."

Jack sat on the edge of his desk. "Warming up for his Golden Ticket or reliving whatever he did to her."

Wrong. “The Golden Ticket wouldn’t be the first taken and she wouldn’t be the last.” He shook his head, his curls bouncing with the movement. “He would hide how special she is. I mean, I would. Wouldn’t you?”

“I’d like you to get closer to this.”

Will turned around and frowned at the man. “You have Heimlich at Harvard andBloom at Georgetown. They do the same thing I do.” He really didn’t want to be pulled in. He had a fake date later this week after all. He didn’t have time to be flown to Minnosota and back.

“That’s not really true, is it? You have a specific way of thinking.” Jack crossed his arms.

“Has there been a lot of discussion about the specific way I think?” Will felt his hackles rise. Just what the hell have people been talking about in the staff room.

“You make jumps you don’t explain.”

“The evidence explains.” Will frowned hating how Jack made it sound like he pulled answers out of his arse. He’s not a psychic.

“Then help me find some evidence.” And when Will’s expression didn’t change from a clear ‘no’, Jack added: “Before another girl goes missing.”

Will studies the beautiful milquetoast faces on the map and sighed. He knew that he couldn’t say no. None of these girls deserved whatever fate they had met. “Fine. But don’t blame me if I upset people.”

“So long as you help me catch the bastard that is taking these girls, you could show up in shorts and Hawiian shirt.”

Will smirked. “I’ll hold you to that.”

Jack rolled his eyes. “Just go pack a bag. We’re going to Minnesota to talk to Nichols’ family.”

This was going to be a long week and it was only Monday. Will sighed, and agreed to meet him at the airport before leaving to get a ‘go bag’ together. It would take him around forty five minutes to get to the house from Qunatico at this time of day and then he had to find a sitter for his dogs. Ugh and he had better text Hannibal but that could wait until he was at the airport.

Will: Going out of state. Should hopefully be back in time for the exhibit.

Hannibal: I had no idea that professors were given such globe trotting opportunities.

Will: I had no idea you could be so sarcastic.

Will: isn’t sarcasm rude?

Hannibal: You are correct. my apologies, Will.

Hannibal: Have fun and be safe. Let me know if the trip over runs.

Hannibal: Do you need help finding a sitter for your dogs?

Will: Thanks, and no it's okay, my usual sitter said that they can do it.

Will only spent roughly a day travelling to and from Minnesota.

They had found Elise Nichols’ body. She had been lovingly put back into her bed, tucked in like a young child. Dressed in pajamas as if she had just gone to sleep. The gray pallor of her skin, the clean puncture wounds were visible under her pajamas, and her unbreathing bosom

had been immediately evident to Will. It was clear that whatever the killer had done to the other's he could not do to Elise.

"It's an apology." Was what he said at the scene. The uncomfortable looks he had received from the team were annoying. He was there because he could slip into the mind of the killers that they hunted, so why were they upset when he did?! This was why he taught instead of being in the field.

Back in his car on the way home from the airport he stared into the middle distance as he drove, hypnotized by the pavement unfurling ahead of him. His headlights reflected off something in the distance. It was moving down the empty road. Will squinted over the steering wheel as he approached, slowing down. Was that a…dog? He pulled his car to a stop and got out of the car, leaving his engine running.

"Hey buddy." Will crouched down low and slowly approached the dog. A rope around its neck suggests it was once tied to something. No collar and its fur was matted. The poor thing. He pulls out a hotdog from his shopping bag in the car. He had briefly stopped into a 7-eleven on the way. "Here you go." He enticed the dog closer with the food.

Will sat on the floor in his living room surrounded by his dogs. Winston, the stray he had just picked up, was thankfully accepted by the rest of the pack. He was currently curled up with Zoe with his head on Will's lap. After a wash, a shave and some fresh food and water, the poor doggie finally gave into his exhaustion. Will fiddled with his phone. It wasn't too weird to text the man that he was fake dating was it?

"He should know about the newest member of the pack." Will reasoned out loud. "Its the kind of thing that I would let my significant other about." He bit his lip in indecision before finally pulling his phone out of his pocket and snapping a picture of his newest mutt.

Will: Meet dog number Seven.

Will: I've called him Winston.

Hannibal: A souvenir of your trip?

Will chuckled and quickly found himself drawn into a conversation with the cannibal.

Will: I found him walking along the road on my way home. He had a rope around his neck, he's too skinny and his fur is matted.

Hannibal: Welcome back, my dear.

Hannibal: It sounds as if he has escaped from a troubling home then.

Hannibal: He is lucky that you found him.

Will: I've given him a bath and shaved off the matted fur. The other dogs seem to like him too.

Hannibal: That is excellent news.

Hannibal: You must be tired from your trip, please head to bed shortly.

He wasn't sure how he felt about the man. It was odd to have someone care about his health, especially when it didn't really concern them. Maybe Hannibal worried because if Will fell ill he wouldn't be a good alibi? Wait no, if he fell ill then Hannibal could always claim that he was at home caring for him and not murdering people?

Will: I will.

Hannibal: Good night. Sleep well, my dear.

Will: Night.

He stared down at his phone, tracing the endearments with his eyes before turning off the screen.

"Get a hold of yourself Will." He told himself sternly. "The man's a killer and you're just fake dating." He shook his head to get rid of all thoughts about Hannibal before carefully extracting himself from his dogs. He really should head to bed.

He woke up covered in sweat, heart pounding from his nightmare. He searched his bed, making sure that it was empty of anybody but himself. He had dreamt that Elise Nichols had been sleeping next to him, pierced by the antlers of a stag and still breathing.

"It was a dream." He whispers into the darkness of the room. "Only a dream." His night shirt and underwear stuck to him unpleasantly due to his night sweats. He grimaced at the feeling and flopped back onto the bed. His bedside clock said that it was only 3am. Far too early. He groaned but got up and changed into dry clothes before climbing back into bed. Hopefully he would sleep without dreams for the rest of the night.

Will walked into the lab to see the members of the forensic team that he had met in Minnesota. Beverly Katz, Brian Zeller and Jimmy Price.

“Curly piece of metal is all we got.” Beverly sneaks a flirtatious smile at him as he enters the room. He ignores it.

“We should be looking at plumbers, steamfitters, tool-workers.” Will, like the others, was also outfitted in gloves, an apron and a splash visor. He flips the visor down and his breathing is amplified in his ears as it fogs his vision.

“Other injuries were probably but not conclusively post mortem.” Zeller turns to Katz “She wasn’t gored.”

“She has lots of piercings that look like they were caused by deer antlers. I didn’t say the deer was responsible for putting them there.” Katz defends herself.

“She was mounted on them. Like hooks. She may have been bled.” Will told them absentmindedly as he examined the body himself.

“Her liver was removed. He took it out and put it back in. See.” Zeller gestures towards the organ.

“Why cut out her liver if he was just going to sew it back in again?” Price ask incredulously. “Seriously? What was the point?”

All muscle tone in Will’s face goes slack as sinks back into the killers mind. It was getting easier and easier to slip in. “Something was wrong with the meat.”

Zeller looks up from the liver. “She has liver cancer.”

The facts briefly ricochet around Will’s mind, then: “He’s eating them.” As soon as the words left his mouth Will couldn’t help but wonder if Hannibal had ever come across a similar situation. He probably shouldn’t ask the man about it.

Will: Hypothetically, if you bought a pig, and then slaughtered it for meat. What would you do if the meat was no good?

Hannibal: Good morning to you, darling.

Hannibal: If the meat was no good then I would use what I could from the animal. It would depend on what was wrong with it.

Hannibal: Why?

Will: Just curious, thanks.

So, it was obvious that the killer in this case cared a lot more about his victims than Hannibal did.

Will received a text from Jack to meet him in his office. He was expecting to chat more about what they found on monday, what he did not expect was to find Hannibal. He wore a red paisley suit. It was as usual tailored perfectly and he cut a ridiculously handsome figure.

“Darling?”

“Hannibal?”

“You two know each other?” Jack exclaimed in surprise looking between the two men. Will knew that they looked like the opposite ends of the spectrum. Hannibal, sleek and well polished while Will looked like a man who lived in the woods with a pack of dogs.

“Jack, if you had told me that the agent that you wanted me to psychological profile was Will Graham, I would have told you that I was unable to do so.”

“Wait what?” Will interrupted and looked angrily at Jack. “Why did you want a profile done on me?”

“Being friends should make it easier.” Jack ignored Will making his lip curl. Rude.

“Will, is my significant other.” Hannibal looked at Jack sternly. “It would be unethical to do a profile on my boyfriend.”

Will blushed darkly. That was the first time Hannibal had called him his boyfriend. It seemed like such a juvenile term and yet it did something funny to his stomach. Fake dating, fake dating! He chanted in his mind as he met the maroon eyes of his so-called Significant Other.

“Well that changes things then.” Jack sighed and rubbed his face.

“I am more than happy to help consult on this case,” Hannibal told him surprising Will. “However, as I said, I will be unable to provide you a profile on Will.”

“That’s fine, we could use all the help we can get.” Jack nodded. “I’ll let Will fill you in.” Wait, what? Jack was saying yes? Can the department even afford to hire two consultants? Was he even being paid for this? He made a mental note to check in with HR.

“Excellent.” Hannibal smiled politely before turning and looking warmly at Will. “Shall we?”

Will let Hannibal lead him out of Jack's office before making him stop.

“Are you sure?” He asked.

“Sure about what, darling?” Hannibal looked at him confused.

“We have plans, remember?” Will gave him a meaningful look. You wanted me to be your alibi for murder, he tries to convey with his eyes. “The exhibit?” Did it make Will a bad

person to prefer the idea of going on the fake date to helping catch a monster?

“It is unfortunate timing but there will be other dates.” He winked. Hannibal actually winked at Will. Will stared at him dumbly. What about his murderous plans? He’s putting them off to help catch a serial killer? That was weird right? Right?

Eating Rude Pigs

A young girl's body was mounted like a table top on antler table legs belonging to a trophy stag. She had similar wounds across her chest like Elise Nichols had as well as two large punctures in her chest where she was impaled on the stag's antlers. It was somehow tasteful in the way that it covered her nudity. Dramatically there was a murder of crows surrounding the body as if they were dinner guests at the table.

"Am I dreaming?" Will wondered out loud as he surveyed the scene. Hannibal stood silently at his back. He was a steady presence anchoring Will to the present. Will had originally objected to having Hannibal occupancy them to the crime scene, he claimed that it wasn't right to make the man see the horrors that would be there. Of course, as the man was the Chesapeak Killer, he had seen and created much worse scenes but Jack didn't know that and Will would have come across as a terrible boyfriend if he didn't try. He obviously lost that argument.

"The head was reported stolen last night, about a mile from here." Jack came to stand next to Will.

"Huh." This isn't right. It wasn't the same as Nichols. Will narrowed his eyes as he scanned the scene again. Brian Zeller, Beverly Katz, and Jimmy Price were combing the immediate area for forensic evidence. Will watched as Beverly and Brian Zeller attempted to shoo the crows away. It was too artistic and cruel...Will froze and slowly looked over his shoulder at Hannibal.

Hannibal stood close enough for Will to feel his body heat, smell his lavender and sandalwood cologne and too see the amusement in his eyes. Will looked away quickly and shut his eyes. He sighed. This wasn't done by the same man who killed Nichols, it was done by Hannibal. Damn the man.

"Minneapolis homicide has already made a statement. They're calling him the 'Minnesota Shrike'." Jack spoke completely unaware of Will's epiphany.

"Like the bird?" Hannibal asked, his voice rumbling in Will's ear.

“Shrike’s a perching bird. Impales mice and lizards on thorny branches and barbed wire. Rips their organs right out of their bodies. Puts them in a little birdie pantry and eats them later. At its leisure.” Price informed them from where he was chasing the crows away.

“Sounds about right.” Katz agreed.

“Can’t tell if it’s sloppy or shrewd.” Jack gestured at the scene.

“He wanted her to be found this way. It’s the homicidal equivalent of faecal smearing. It’s petulant. I almost feel like he’s mocking her.” He tried to ignore Hannibal who seemed to press even closer to him. “Or he’s mocking us.”

“Where’d all his love go?” Jack asked, referring to Will’s profile for the murderer.

“Whoever tucked Elise Nichols into bed didn’t paint this picture.” Come on, wasn’t that obvious? He wanted to shout. The two murders were as different as night and day.

Brian Zeller looked up from Cassie’s mounted corpse and announced, “He took her lungs. I think she was still alive when he cut them out.”

Will has finally turned away to give his soul some relief and found himself looking straight at Hannibal. Jack and Zeller stood over the table that was the girl’s body with Katz and Price working nearby.

Will didn’t take his eyes away from Hannibal as he spoke, “Our cannibal loves women. He doesn’t want to destroy them. He wants to consume them. Keep some part of them inside. This girl’s killer thought she was a pig.”

“You think this is a copycat?” Jack asked, calling his attention from Hannibal’s uncomfortably proud gaze.

“I don’t know.” He shook his head, the lies coming distressingly easy to him. “The cannibal who killed Elise Nichols had a place to do it and no interest in field Kabuki. He has a house or two, or a cabin. Something with an antler room.”

“We’re already looking at Minnesota steamfitters and plumbers and people with hunting licenses.”

“He has a daughter. Same age as the other girls. Same hair colour, same eye colour, same height, same weight. She’s an only child.” Will tilted his head as he spoke. “She’s leaving home. He can’t stand the thought of losing her. She’s his Golden Ticket.” It's why all the girls looked the same, why there was no semen on or in the bodies. He loved them but paternally not sexually.

“What about the copycat?” Jack demanded.

Will purposely looked at Hannibal as he spoke. “An intelligent psychopath, particularly a sadist, is hard to catch. There’s no traceable motive. There’ll be no patterns. He may never kill like this again.”

There was a small smile on Hannibal’s face as he asked, “Will he kill again?”

“Yes,” Will looked away from Hannibal. “This isn’t his first kill and it certainly won’t be his last.”

“Great, just what we need.” Jack huffed. “Can’t you tell me anything else?”

“No, but why don’t you have Hannibal write you up a psychological profile.” Will calls back as he turns to duck under the police tape. He had seen enough. “You seem rather impressed with his opinion.”

He didn't wait for anyone to catch up with him and headed straight back to the hotel. Hannibal would be returning to the same room as him anyway. He had managed to get Jack to book them a double room to share seeing as they were 'partners'. Will wasn't best pleased to be sharing a room, let alone a bed with the serial killer. Sure he had planned on staying the night at his place but for most of the night the man would be out murdering and displaying a corpse and they wouldn't be sharing a bed.

Despite leaving the crime scene after him, Hannibal was already in the room when Will arrived. Will scowled at him.

"Why did you do it?"

"Hello to you too." Hannibal smiled genially from the kitchenette. He had sneakily updated the room that Jack had booked for them. "I'm making dinner."

"Is the main ingredient from the field this morning?"

"Hmm it's from a particularly rude pig, yes."

"Hannibal." Will complained.

"Will." He threw his name back at him.

"Why?"

"You needed help."

"Explain."

“On the plane ride over you mentioned that you felt you were missing something. So I wanted to give you a scene that directly contrasted what you had told me.”

Will sighed and threw himself into a kitchen chair. “Thanks I guess.” He grudgingly told him. “It did help.”

“You are most welcome.” He hated the smug tone in Hannibal’s voice.

“So what is for dinner?” Will asked sitting up in his seat as he watched Hannibal cook.

“It's a protein scramble. I’m making enough so we can have leftovers for breakfast tomorrow.” The smell of cooking meat filled the room. Will’s mouth watered.

“I should hate you, you know.” Will pointed out as he shifted in his seat.

“Oh?” Hannibal seemed to stiffen. “Then why don’t you?”

“I should hate you because you’ve made my life so much more complicated than it needs to be, for feeding me rude pigs and yet…” He trailed off taking in the sharp lines of the man at the small stove. It was unfair how attractive this serial killer was.

“And yet?” He prompted.

“And yet, I find myself wanting to be friends with you.” Will eventually settled on. He wouldn’t mind more but this was fake, the dating was fake and he knew that Hannibal was just using him for an alibi. Although why he decided to come along to help catch monsters like himself, Will did not know.

“We are friends, Will.” Hannibal smiled and plated up dinner. “More than friends as far as anyone else is concerned.” The bastard winked again.

“Stop doing that?” Will demanded as Hannibal put the plates on the tiny table.

“Doing what?” Hannibal blinked innocently at Will. He was not buying it.

“Stop winking.” Will accepted the food and picked up a fork to start eating. “Its weird.”

“Rude.”

“Oh heaven forbid I be rude.” The first mouthful of food was heavenly as the first meal he had at Hannibal’s house. “God this good.” He was definitely going to hell, if not for the murder of his dog groomer but for voluntarily eating human meat. He was a cannibal, a willing fully consenting cannibal.

“I’m rather glad that you like it.” Hannibal started to eat as well. “As for the winking,” He smirked and shrugged elegantly. How he managed to make such a mundane gesture look so elegant, Will had no idea.

“That’s not an answer.” He pointed out before scooping up more food.

“Indeed.”

Will groaned and decided to ignore the man and finish his food.

Later when they were getting ready for bed, Will was suddenly gripped with nervous energy. He looked at his pale reflection in the bathroom mirror and worried. He hadn’t shared a bed with someone in some years. Sure he’s had sex but they were usually one night stands in motels, hotels or the other person’s house and he never stayed long after the event. What if

Hannibal preferred to sleep on the right side of the bed? That was where Will preferred to sleep! Would they argue over it? Or would Hannibal graciously give him that side of the bed? Maybe Will should just sleep on the floor? Yeah the floor sounded good.

He took a deep breath before leaving the bathroom. He would sleep on the floor and everything would be fine. He was met with the sight of Hannibal on the left side of the bed in full pyjamas that were amusingly plaid like his suit that he wore that day. He was reading in bed.

“Do you have a matching set of pyjamas for all of your suits?” He asked leaning on the door frame.

“No comment.” His lips twitched before he shut his book and placed it on his bedside table. “Are you going to stand there all night or are you going to join me?”

“I was thinking of sleeping on the floor.”

“Nonsense.” Hannibal sat up. “Don’t be silly, Will. The bed is plenty big enough for the both of us.”

Will stared at the bed and then took a good look at the carpet on the floor. It had likely once been white but was now grey and honestly the longer he looked at the less he wanted to sleep on it. He sighed and gave in. He got into the bed. At least he got to sleep on the side that he wanted. He shifted around and got comfortable on his side facing away from Hannibal. The mattress was soft but still too stiff for his liking, his bed at home was as soft as a cloud. The blankets were rough, too rough really but he tried to ignore it and let sleep overcome him.

“Goodnight, Will.” Hannibal’s voice was far too close for comfort.

“Good night, Hannibal.”

Will woke slowly. It was as if he was slowly pulling himself out of a pool of syrup. He was warm and the pressure on his body was perfect, it was just like his weighted blanket at home. Warm breath brushed against his neck. He blinked sleepily as his mind caught up and he realised that he should be feeling like this because he was on a case and he did not have his weighted blanket...Feeling more awake he noticed that the sheets hadn't bothered him because they weren't covering him.

Hannibal was lying on top of him almost completely covering him. His face was buried in Will's neck, a large warm hand on his chest and his legs entangled with his. Will blushed as he noticed his morning wood digging into Hannibal's stomach. Oh god. So much for keeping to his side of the bed. And the worst part? It was the best night of sleep that he had ever had.

"Good morning." Hannibal's chest rumbled as he spoke into Will's ear, his breath hot against his skin.

"Morning." Will hated how high his voice was. "We need to get up."

"Mhmm." Hannibal hummed and nuzzled his neck.

"H-Hannibal." Will was flushed red and he cursed himself as his cock twitched. "We have a lot of work to do."

Hannibal sighed, his lips brushing Will's skin raising goosebumps and made no move to get up.

"W-we need to catch the Minnesota shrike, r-remember?" Will stuttered. This man was the devil.

With one more gusty sigh, Hannibal finally, finally lifted himself off Will. He twisted his body so that he was straddling Will, his hands on either side of Will's head. His breath, despite it being the morning, smelt fine as it brushed against his face. Will couldn't avoid looking at Hannibal in the eye. His deep maroon iris were just thin rings around his expanded pupils. Those eyes scanned his face for a moment before closing. The man then groaned as he climbed off him. Will felt ridiculously light without Hannibal's weight grounding him.

Will didn't wait around and headed to the bathroom first after grabbing his clothes as Hannibal seemed to be distracted by his phone. He took a quick cold shower to wake him up properly and to get rid of his erection. An erection that was caused by his fake boyfriend. He groaned in despair and rested his forehead against the cold tiles. That man was going to drive him insane.

Will left the bathroom to sight and smell of Hannibal warming up the protein scramble from last night. His mouth watered at the memory and he couldn't wait to eat it again. He decided to pretend that this morning hadn't happened and so easily made his way to the table again.

"What time is Jack coming?" He asked as he sat.

"He is deposed in court." Hannibal plated up the food. "The adventure will be yours and mine today." He smiled widely as he placed them on the table and joined him.

"You're really excited about this aren't you." Will pointed out bemused by the sheer excitement the man was showing.

"Yes," He made no effort to hide it. "I get to peek behind the curtain. I'm curious how the FBI goes about its business when it isn't kicking in doors."

"It's not as exciting as you're thinking it will be." He warned. "Don't get your hopes up."

"Oh don't worry, Will. I'm sure that I will enjoy myself."

Will narrowed his eyes at him. That was a very suspicious response. He would have to keep an eye on his fake boyfriend. He had already committed one murder in an attempt to help him with the case. Who knows what else the man would do?

Bird Spotting

Chapter Notes

A bit shorter but only because this really should have been part of the last chapter...oops? The chapter next week will be longer

Will hadn't really given much thought to why Hannibal spilled the box of files or why he disappeared as Will and the secretary of that construction firm picked them up. Although staring at the woman dead at his feet outside a suspect's house, he probably should have.

He glared at Hannibal but said nothing. He pulled out his gun and approached the door.He rammed into it, putting all his weight behind the action. It's hard to say whether the sickening crack was from his shoulder or the door's wood frame. He gives it a well-placed kick, and another, splintering it little-by-little until he can stumble inside. He works through the house one room at a time, gun first. Silently he cursed Hannibal. He didn't have any proof but he knew that this was the man's fault.

"Garret Jacob Hobbs? F.B.I.!" Will calls out. He follows the blood splatters on the floor and walls and finds his way to the kitchen. He freezes in the doorway at the sight.

Garret Jacob Hobbs, the man that they were there to interview, was stood, wild eyed at the far end of the kitchen with his daughter held to his chest and a knife pressed to her throat. She looked exactly like all of the victims or rather all of the victims looked like her.

Then Garret Jacob Hobbs starts slashing at his daughter's neck.

Will shoots. Hobbs keeps slashing so Will keeps shooting. With one last deep cut, Hobbs finally falls. Will distantly registers Hannibal stepping into the kitchen but he is focused on Hobbs' daughter. She struggles to breath underscored by the wheeze of air through her slashed wind-pipe. Will applied pressure to the wounds, scooping Abigail onto his lap. He did not want her to die. He could kill Hannibal later.

“Here let me.” Hannibal takes over applying pressure on the wound. “I was a surgeon, remember?”

Will begrudgingly let him take over. “Don’t let her die.” He orders with a point look. He hopes that Hannibal realised that they will be having words after all is done.

Hobbs' daughter, now known to be Abigail Hobbs, survived.

Will: We need to talk.

Will sent the text as he sat in the hotel room. The case was closed, the witness and possible accomplice was in hospital. Hannibal got to go in the ambulance with her, holding her hand the entire time as the paramedics took over. The man had yet to return to the hotel room.

Hannibal: I’ll be at the hotel shortly.

Hannibal kept his word and walked into the hotel twenty minutes after his text. He looked as elegant and put together as always despite wearing yesterday’s clothes. Will wanted to hate him, honestly he did. Especially if Hannibal was the reason that Hobbs escalated to killing his wife and attempting to kill his daughter before they arrived despite never showing any signs of escalation previously.

“Good afternoon, Will.” Hannibal smiled at him as he pulled off his coat. “You will be glad to know that Abigail will be fine. She’s in a medicated coma at the moment just so that she can heal without aggravating her wounds.”

“That's great.” Will smiled in relief but then shook his head. No. He wouldn’t let Hannibal distract him. “But I don’t want to talk about that.”

“Then what would you like to talk about?”

Will narrowed his eyes as he registered Hannibal's therapist voice. "I would like to know what you did after deliberately spilling the files on the floor."

Hannibal just smiled and tilted his head slightly.

"Did you tip him off?"

"Yes."

"Why?" Will was surprised that Hannibal admitted it so easily.

"Because I wanted to see what happened." He shrugged before regret clouded his face. "I did not however expect it to take the turn it did."

"Well it did Hannibal." Will threw his hands up in the air exasperated. "A woman is dead, a girl is a coma and the serial killer is dead. All because you tipped him off just to see what would happen!"

"I'm not sure why this has upset you." Hannibal frowned. "You already knew that I'm not exactly a good person."

Will flinched as if he had been slapped. Yes he had known on an intellectual level that Hannibal wasn't a good person. He was after all the Chesapeake Ripper, a serial killer who displayed his murders so yeah, he wasn't a good person. On the other hand, he was also the sweet man who took him out to dinner and went fishing with him. Then again they were fake dates, just like their relationship was fake. He pushed yesterday morning from his mind, how nice it was...

"Of course, you're right." Will closed himself off. He wouldn't let Hannibal trick him again. He straightened his suitcase on the bed. "I'll be flying home this evening."

“I shall have to phone the airport to make sure that I am on the same flight.” Hannibal hummed pulling out his phone. “It would after all be weird if you went home without your boyfriend.”

“Right,” Will grimaced. “How could I forget.”

“Will…” Hannibal looked up from his phone and frowned at him. “Are you angry with me?”

“No, Hannibal.” He sighed feeling tired and just so drained. He wanted to go home and cuddle his dogs. “I’m not angry with you.” I’m angry with myself, he thought viciously. Angry at how easily he fell for Hannibal’s charms and forgot about how they were only ‘together’ for an alibi.

“I’m glad.”

God, Will didn’t know whether he wanted to punch that soft smile of the bastard’s face or kiss it. In the end he focused on packing his things. He wouldn’t be ensnared again.

It was two days later that Will walked through a hospital, the fluorescent lights glared down on him. He should have returned to the college, he should actually be teaching a lecture at this precise moment but...goddamn it he couldn't resist the urge to check on Abigail. Jack had pulled some strings to get her hospitalised closer to Quantico. He believed that she was an accessory in her father’s crimes and wanted to question her as soon as she woke up.

He entered Abigail’s hospital room to find Abigail Hobbs integrated into an elaborate weave of life-saving technology. Sleeping in a chair next to her bed Hannibal Lecter. He was holding her hand, offering a tiny comfort. Will sighed at the sight and ignored the twinge his heart made at the sight and quietly sat in the empty chair next to Lecter watching his unconscious care for the girl they both saved. Well, that they both saved after Hannibal had put her at further risk.

He hadn’t forgiven Hannibal for it but he was willing to overlook it. For now. It didn’t freaking help that Hannibal looked like a soft puppy when he slept and Will would always

have a soft spot for strays.

Orpheus

Will picked up his suit two days late but the tailor that Hannibal had sent him to was very understanding, it probably helped that the case was splattered all over the news along with the fact that Will had killed the serial killer. The suit itself was a stunning dark blue twill suit. It would match the cute tie with the dogs on it. He could feel his wallet crying but he ordered three more suits to be made. He left the patterns etc up to the tailor seeing as he had done such a good job.

Once he was outside the store he dialled Hannibal's number.

"I have my suit." Will said in lieu of greeting.

"That is good to hear." Hannibal laughed a little breathlessly. "Did Michael treat you well?" There was a sickening snap in the background. Will decided that he didn't need or want to know what Hannibal was doing.

"Yeah," He nodded despite the fact that Hannibal couldn't see him. "As we missed the art exhibit, I was wondering…" He trailed off biting his lip. Their relationship was fake. The whole reason for why Will had been going to go to the exhibit was to be Hannibal's alibi, so why was he trying to get the man to ask him out again?

"There is an opera performance tonight that I would love to take you too." Will could practically hear the smile in the man's voice.

"What's it called?" Will asked his grip tightening on his phone. Hannibal did indeed have somewhere to take him. He wasn't sure how to feel about that . There was a squelch from the other side of the phone and Hannibal grunted. Will was pretty sure that he was listening to the man dismember someone and yet it sounded abnormally erotic. He started walking to his car, phone to his ear and suit draped over his shoulder. The sooner he got home the better.

"Orfeo ed Euridice" Hannibal sighed gustily as there was another snap. "It's based on the tale of Orpheus."

“Isn’t that the one where as they are leaving hell, one of them turns to look behind them and dies again?”

“You mean the Underworld.” Hannibal corrects him. “But yes you are correct.”

“Sounds good, what time should I meet you?” Will juggled his phone and suit as he pulled out his car keys. “Do you want me to meet you at the theatre or?” He managed to lock it and carefully lay his new suit on the back seat of the car before moving to the driver’s side and climbed in.

“Come to my house at 5 o’clock.” Hannibal more or less ordered. “We’ll have something to eat before we go.” More squelching and a loud snap.

“Okay, I’ll see you later then.”

“Goodbye Darling.”

With a red face Will hung up and buried his face in the steering wheel. How could Hannibal so easily call him pet names? Especially as neither of them were around anyone to need the act. He whined quietly as his mind replayed Hannibal’s grunt as he snapped bones. Well Will assumed that is what was making the snapping noises he could hear. The grunt was sexier than it had any right to be! He shook his head and took some deep breaths. He had a few more things to do before the opera that evening and he did not have time to quietly freak out over how attractive the Chesapeak Ripper was.

His first stop after the tailors was his home. He needed to hang up his suit so that it didn’t wrinkle. He hung it up in one of the rooms on the second floor of his house that he should be using as a bedroom but didn’t. He and his dogs hardly went up there so it was safe from dog fur.

Next he went to Quantico. He needed to redo his firearms qualifications if he was going to be allowed to carry a gun on cases.

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

Will unloaded the gun's clip into the target. Gunshots in the stalls around him rang in his ears, but he's focused on his target, he needed to pass this test. He felt safer with a gun on him, especially when facing serial killers like Hobbs...and Hannibal but seeing as the man seemed to have no interest in eating him, Will was pretty sure he was safe.

He pulled off his safety glasses, setting his pistol down. "How did I do?" He asked the examiner.

"You passed." The strict no nonsense woman nodded at him as she wrote on a clipboard. "Congratulations." Will liked that the line was delivered deadpan and that he wasn't fussed over.

"Thanks."

Thirdly he went food shopping. He went to a different store to the last one. He did not want to risk running into the asshole that thought it was fine to shove him out of the way to get to the check out. He also bought another bottle of over price wine to bring to Hannibal's later.

Then he finally went home to get ready.

Perhaps, Will thought as he rang Hannibal's door bell, he should have bought a bow tie. He was dressed in his new blue suit and his new favourite tie: the one with little dogs on it. The opera was more a bow tie event than a work tie but he just really, really wanted to wear his new tie. That and he wanted to see Hannibal's reaction to it.

"Will." Hannibal smiled warmly as he opened the door. Will watched as the man's eyes scanned him. "You look fantastic." His eyes lingered on the tie. "I especially like the tie."

"Thank you." Will couldn't help the grin that spread across his face. "The tie is my favourite too."

"Come on in." Hannibal held the door open and ushered him inside. It was just as opulent as the first time he had visited. "I've made us something simple."

"I didn't know that you could do simple." Will teased.

Hannibal just chuckled.

Dinner was indeed a simple affair of fancy sandwiches with 'mystery' meat. The only mystery was that Will did not know who it used to be, Hannibal was rather tight lipped about it.

Before Will knew it they were pulling up to the Metropolitan Arts Centre for the opera.

"This will be the first opera that I will ever have attended." Will commented as they parked.

"Then I am honoured to be able to take you to your first." Hannibal climbed out of the car and was around to Will's door before Will had even finished undoing his seatbelt.

“Thank you.” Will said bemused as he accepted Hannibal’s hand to help him out of the car. He ignored how large and warm Hannibal’s hand was around his, not to mention the hidden strength. The man was a beast.

“I took the liberty of having us arrive later to miss out on the before show mingling.” Hannibal offered his arm.

“Thanks.” Will hooked his arm through his and allowed Hannibal to guide him. “Is there anything I should know? Like is there opera etiquette that i should be aware of?”

“Not at all.” Hannibal led them up the steps and into the ornate building. “Just enjoy yourself. There will be a little mingling afterwards but nothing too strenuous”

“I’m sure I will manage.” Will rolled his eyes. Sure he didn’t like people but that didn’t mean that he was incapable of talking to them.

“I have the utmost faith in you.” Hannibal smirked.

Hannibal had a box seat because of course he did. The show itself was good. Will wasn’t really a big fan of opera but what he was a big fan of was the rapturous look on his face as he watched the performance. Hannibal was the first stand at the end of the show to clap. Will joined him and couldn’t help but smile fondly at the man. For such a cold hearted killer, he certainly got emotional over fictional stories and music.

As they were heading down to socialise Will’s phone rang.

“Graham.” He answered it immediately when he saw that it was Jack.

“We have a case.”

“I’m currently at an opera, someone will have to pick me up.” He sighed and sent Hannibal an apologetic look.

“Fine, I’ll pick you up on the way.” And with that Jack hung up.

“Sorry, Hannibal.” Will scowled at the phone. “It seems that I have a case.”

“It's alright.” He reassured him. “Your work is important.”

“I know but-”

“Will.” Hannibal stopped him. “I don’t mind.”

“You will.” All his past relationships always ended because of his work or his dogs and despite knowing that this thing he had with Hannibal was fake, he was worried that it too would end sooner rather than later.

“Perhaps at sometime down the road but right now? Right now I am going to walk you outside and wait until you get picked up.”

“Thanks.”

“Anything for you darling.”

They were met by Jack at the foot of the stairs leading up the arts centre. The man looked rather annoyed but didn’t say anything as Hannibal kissed Will’s cheek before opening the passenger door for him.

“Be safe, darling.”

“Get home safe.” Will shot back. “I’ll get my car when I can.”

Hannibal smiled softly and shut the door for him. Jack only waited long enough for Hannibal to step back before pulling away. Will couldn’t stop himself from looking back at the monster he had just been on a date with.

Their relationship was starting to feel a lot less fake.

Sleeping Beauty

Chapter Notes

I was supposed to be starting on the Mushroom case in this chapter but uh instead you've got this...

I hope you like it! <3

After Jack had picked him up from the opera, they had stopped at Will's place to get his go bag and passport before heading to the airport. He managed to call his usual dog sitter from the car and drop Hannibal a text to inform him that he didn't know how long he would be gone.

Hannibal: Make sure you're being paid overtime for these trips

Will: I'm not even sure I'm on the docket as a consultant yet.

Hannibal: Make sure when you return to speak to your HR department. You deserved to be paid for job

Will: I will.

Will: I'll talk to you later, we're at the airport now.

Hannibal: Take care, my dear

Will wakes with a small start as Jack Crawford knocked his knuckles on the window he had been using as a pillow. They were in Minnesota again.

“We’re here.” Jack’s gruff voice reminded Will where he was. Will was rather annoyed with Jack. He hadn’t even brought him in for a new case, no, they were back in Minnesota to examine Hobbs’ Murder cabin.

Will climbed out the car and stretched before taking in the eerie animal-skull covered cabin where Garret Jacob Hobbs committed his murders. No trace of the actual wall is visible through the bramble, now covered in F.B.I. evidence bags, barely concealing the antlers underneath. A cold wind rustled the dead leaves and added a creepy rattle to the sound track of the area.

Will entered the cabin. He stared transfixed by the horrifying cage of bones that met him. Every inch of wall, floor and ceiling is obscured by layers of antlers under a veil-like evidence bag. Will focused on the bloody stag rack, cutting through the bag to look closer. He turned, examining the rest of the room. Will looked around the room from this horrible vantage point. The door to the little shack creaks open as Jack steps quietly in, a steady unease about him. Will doesn't look up. It was horrific and new fodder for his nightmares.

“Could be a permanent installation in your Evil Minds museum.” He quipped trying to cut through the unease that filled the room.

“What we learn from Garret Jacob Hobbs will help us catch the next Garret Jacob Hobbs. There are still seven bodies unaccounted for.” Jack said ignoring Will’s comment

“Because he ate them.” Will sighed. Seriously, why hasn’t Jack realised that yet?

“Had to be parts he didn't eat.”

“Not necessarily.” Will wanted to shout but instead made his volume match the conversation. All the man had to do was look around himself. It was clear that Hobbs used every bit of his kills!

“What if Hobbs wasn't eating alone?” Jack asked after looking around the room. “It is a lot of work. Disappearing these girls, butchering them and then worse. All without leaving a shred of anything outside of this room.”

Will considers that a moment, it would be a bit difficult to do all that alone. “Someone he hunted with?”

“Or someone in a coma. Who happens to also be someone he hunted with.”

Abigail. Jack was talking about Abigail. “She's a suspect?” He asked trying to keep his tone light so Jack won’t realise how much that idea upsets him. He wasn’t sure why it upset him. He didn’t know the girl, had only checked up on her once after the event so there was no rational explanation to why he was feeling protective of her. Perhaps it was because Hannibal, his fake boyfriend, had tipped Hobbs off which led him to lash out desperately and injure Abigail. Did he feel somewhat responsible? That was ridiculous, he wasn’t Hannibal’s keeper.

“We've been conducting house-to-house interviews around the Hobbs residence and this property.”

“What's the gossip?” Will had to resist rolling his eyes. Gossip was not fact.

“Hobbs and his daughter spent a lot of time together. They spent a lot of time together here. She would be the ideal bait, wouldn't she?”

“Hobbs killed alone.” Will said decisively. He didn't doubt that Abigail might have help her father lure in his victims or at the very least she provided him an excuse to go onto college campuses to look for victims. She was perhaps complicit in the murders, but Will didn’t believe that she had a hand in actually murdering them.

Will is about to point all of that out when he notices something on the floor. “Someone has been here.” He pulls out some tweezers and pulls up a long red hair.

Later as Will climbed into a taxi (Will had to use a bloody taxi because Jack lived in the opposite direction and didn’t want to waste gas) He received a text from Hannibal.

Hannibal: it seems you have a leak darling.

Hannibal: Tattlecrime seems to have gotten crime scene photos

Will groaned and opened the browser on his phone before heading to that cursed website.

IN THE MINNESOTA SHRIKE'S NEST: EXCLUSIVE PHOTOS

The latest article's headline screamed out of the page with gruesome photos of the antler room. This certainly explained the red hair found at the seen, bloody Freddie Lounds. That cursed woman was like an infection, always coming back when you least expect it.

Will: Thanks, just looked at it.

Will: It explains a forensic anomaly at the scene.

Will: Also please remind me that when I speak to HR tomorrow that I need to be reimbursed for the Taxi home.

Hannibal: You are welcome, darling.

Hannibal: Your boss didn't drive you home?

Hannibal: Your car is also still at my house. If you aren't too close to home may I recommend that you come to mine instead?

Hannibal: That way you can drive to work tomorrow. I can wash your clothes so that you will have something clean to wear to work tomorrow.

Will bit his lip in indecision before deciding that Hannibal made a good point.

"Sorry, do you mind taking me to an address in Baltimore instead." Will told the driver.

“Not a problem.” The taxi changed direction.

Will: I’m on my way over.

Hannibal: see you soon, darling.

Hannibal met him at his front door, looking resplendent in plaid pyjamas. Will felt rather bemused that the man would open the door while in his bed clothes but a quick glance at his phone showed that it was nearing midnight. The man had probably been in bed reading when he noticed the article. That gave him a warm feeling that he did not want to examine too closely.

“Hey,” Will smiled tiredly. “Thanks for letting me stay the night.”

“It's no trouble, Will.” Hannibal smiled welcomingly and guided him inside. “Let’s get your clothes in the wash and then I will show you where you can sleep.”

“Thanks.”

The clothes were put in the washing machine and put on and then Will was ushered upstairs. It was as opulent as the rest of the house and was that a suit of samurai armour next to one of the doors? It was indeed. It was also the room that Hannibal led him too.

“I’m afraid that my guest rooms aren’t suitable for habitation at the moment so I hope you won’t mind sharing with me again.” Hannibal said nonchalantly as if sharing a bed with him wasn’t a big deal. “You can borrow a set of my pyjamas too.”

“Will they match yours?” Will asked dryly as he tried to hide his nervousness at the thought of sharing a bed with the man again. He had slept so well that night but...but wasn’t it weird? They weren’t actually dating so wasn’t it odd for two men to share a bed? To wake up entangled so completely with each other?

“I unfortunately do not have a matching set available for you at this moment in time.” Hannibal actually sounded sad about that fact. Will was suddenly concerned that the man was going to buy him matching pyjamas for Christmas. “So these will have to make do.” He pulled out a blue set of similarly patterned pyjamas to his own. In fact they were almost identical, the only difference Will could find was the colour. Hannibal’s were red.

“It's honestly fine,” Will took them from him with a small smile. “Thank you.”

“It’s no trouble.” Hannibal looked at him with a soft expression. “Why don’t you go get ready for bed while I lock up?”

“Okay.” Will clutched the blue plaid pyjamas to his chest with one arm, while in his other hand he held his go- bag. “Um, where is your bathroom?”

“I have an ensuite through that door.” Hannibal pointed to the single white door on the far side of the room. “Feel free to shower,” Somehow that didn’t sound like a suggestion but rather an order, “There are clean towels in the cupboard under the sink.”

“Okay, thank you.” Will decided to not wait for Hannibal to leave the bedroom and instead made his way to the bathroom. He felt that if he waited for the man to go then they would just end up standing awkwardly together. Not that Hannibal ever did anything awkwardly.

The bathroom was tiled completely in black marble. It was odd but beautiful too. It completely suited the cannibal that lived here. Will placed the clean pyjamas on a little cupboard before digging out the towels which were blood red, because of course they were. He placed them to the side as well before using the toilet and washing his hands and turning on the shower.

Will sniffed at the products lining the shower and found that they all smelt rather pleasantly like Hannibal. No duh, he thought to himself. Of course they smelt like Hannibal, they are what he uses! He must be more tired than he thought to be making obvious connections like that in his head seem less obvious… if that even made sense? With a shrug he decided to use Hannibal’s shampoo and body wash. He quickly washed his hair and his body before turning off the shower, climbing out and drying himself.

He pulled on the pyjama bottoms before brushing his teeth, with his own tooth brush from his go-bag, before pulling on the pyjama top once his mouth and face was toothpaste free. He dried his hair the best he could before placing the towels that he used into the laundry basket in the room. After making sure that the room was as tidy as it was before he used it, Will went back into the bedroom.

There was no sign of Hannibal.

Will wondered if it would be rude to get into bed before the man was back...but he was so tired and it would be less awkward if Hannibal joined him while he was already asleep. What was wrong with Will, for him to feel so comfortable in being vulnerable around a serial killer? Too tired to think any more on it, Will climbed into the side of the bed that didn't seem to be used.

He was asleep before his head hit the pillow.

Hannibal moved his darlings clothes into the dryer once they were washed. Usually he would put them on for a longer wash but he simply didn't have the time so the quick wash, only thirty minutes, would have to do if he wanted Will to have dry clean clothes in the morning.

He made sure that the house was locked up before returning upstairs to his very own Botticelli Angel. He knocked on the door before entering, it was after all only polite to warn the man that he was coming in. Only to find that the darling had crawled into bed already.

He smiled softly at the curls covering his pillow. He carefully joined the sleeping beauty in bed. He curled his hand over Will's hip and gently pulled him closer, inhaling deeply. He grinned. The beautiful boy had used Hannibal's own shampoo and therefore most likely his body was too. It was intoxicating to know that this man would smell like him all day tomorrow.

Just Dudes being Dudes

Chapter Notes

> So still not at the mushroom case but we're closer! And I think you're going to like the start of this chapter <3 Enjoy!

Will woke slowly. He was warm and his weighted blanket held him to the bed in a way that made him feel safe. He must have done the laundry recently as it smelt heavenly...had he changed the fabric softener of something? Then the blanket moved. Will froze.

“G’morning.” A heavily accented voice mumbled in his ear. Warm breath tickled him, he squirmed. His ears were always so ticklish. That response got him a deep chuckle that rumbled in the chest of the man that was lying on top of him.

“M-morning.” Will stuttered, his face felt hot, he wasn’t sure if he was blushing from Hannibal’s proximity or the embarrassment of having his morning wood dig into the other man’s stomach. It was most likely the latter. It didn’t help that he could feel Hannibal’s rather sizable package against his hip.

Hannibal nuzzled his nose behind Will’s ear making him squirm again which also made him unintentionally grind himself up into the man. Will moaned. Hannibal froze. Will froze. For a moment both were as still as statues before Hannibal was pressing him down into the mattress and rutting his own hardness against Will’s hip bone.

“H-hannibal?” Will asked breathlessly. “W-what-” He cut off with a moan as Hannibal shifted so that their legs could slot together and that he could thrust his clothed cock against Will’s.

“T-tell me to stop.” Hannibal grunted. “If you don’t want me to continue.”

Will only could only moan as the man rocked their hips together again and again. It was so hot to see the usually so well put together man become wild on top of him. Will's hands came up to grab Hannibal's back pulling him more firmly down on him. Almost immediately Hannibal's face fell into the junction of his neck.

"Ngh, ah!" Will keened as the man bit, licked and sucked on his neck. Most likely leaving marks in his wake. "Nyah, Hannibal!" His eyes rolled into the back of his head as his hips bucked erratically. Embarrassingly he came quickly. It had been far too long since he had been hot and heavy with someone.

Hannibal rutted harshly against his flagging erection before biting sharply into Will's shoulder, his body shuddering, his hips jerking before stilling. He collapsed on top of Will, crushing him with his weight.

They lay there getting their breath back for a few moments before Hannibal finally rolled off Will.

"Are you alright?" He asked, his maroon eyes scanning Will's face.

"Yeah." Will nodded but his mind was going mad. What did this mean?! Did people who fake dated have sex? Like was that normal? Or was that just because they were both hard and horny while sharing a bed? Surely it wasn't too weird for two guys to help each other with that problem?

"We should probably get up if we do not wish to be late to work." Hannibal sighed and sat up, grimacing at the wetness in his trousers.

"Good point." Will groaned. "And I need to speak with HR today before Jack tries to drag me across the country again."

"Should he have sorted out your consultation fees before approaching you to help with the Minnesota Shrike case?"

“You would think so.” Will answered as he sat up.

“You can use the shower first, I’ll bring up your clothes and leave them outside the door for you.”

“Thanks,” Will smiled at him before climbing out of the bed. He tried not to pay attention to how the pyjama bottoms stuck to him due to the mess he had made.

Will managed to make it to HR before his first lecture of the day. He was completely awake despite it still being early thanks to the ambrosia that Hannibal called coffee, it was unlike any coffee Will had ever drunk.

“Hi Debbie.” Will greeted the receptionist. He made sure to know the name of every receptionist, maintenance staff member and cooks on the campus. After all, they were statistically more likely to snap under the pressure of their jobs, and if he could help relieve even a little of that pressure to keep them from snapping then learning their names was the least he could do. It helped that they were genuinely lovely people.

“Hello, Will.” The pretty blonde smiled back. “What brings you to our neck of the woods?”

“Jack Crawford has pulled me into consulting for him.” He told her. “I just want to make sure that my contract is updated so I’m being paid for it and hopefully being reimbursed for the taxi that i had to take home last night after he pulled me away from a date to go to Minnesota so I didn’t have my car.”

“Hmm.” She frowned slightly as she checked on the computer. “It doesn’t look like he has… Take a seat and I’ll see if Darren is available to speak to you.”

“Thanks, you’re a star.” Will nodded and took a seat in one of the grey cushioned chairs in the waiting area. He fiddled with his shirt collar, thankful that it hid his numerous hickies

courtesy of Hannibal.

Thankfully Darren was free and they sorted out Will's contract and reimbursed his taxi fee. Jac could no longer turn up without calling him to take him across the country on a case. He also was not allowed to interrupt his lectures without a day's notice so that Will could arrange cover. It was after all unfair to his students. Darren also promised to corner Jack and inform him of the changes as soon as the man was in the building.

With that sorted Will left to go to his first lecture of the day where, to his surprise, he's greeted with a standing ovation from his students. The clapping stopped him cold. Will waved them off, uncomfortable. Why were they clapping? It was so inappropriate!

"Thank you. Please stop that." He frowned at his students.

The applause petered out and he dumped his briefcase on the desk and dived right into the lecture. He dimmed the lights, brought up a slide of Hobbs's resignation letter.

"This is how I caught Garret Jacob Hobbs. It's his resignation letter. Anybody see the clue?" he asked. A few hands shot into the air. He ignored them. "There isn't one. He wrote a letter, left his phone number... but no address. That's it." Will clicked to the next slide. It was the crime scene photo of the Hobbs kitchen -- dead Hobbs, blood everywhere. It's a horrific scene, but his students had to know what they were going to come up against in their chosen careers.

"Bad bookkeeping and dumb luck." Will quickly clicked to the next slide: It was a picture of Garret Jacob Hobbs and his Daughter Abigail in happier times, they were smiling after a hunting trip.

"Jacob Hobbs is dead. The question now is how to stop those his story is going to inspire." Will studied the picture, taking stock of the happy Abigail before he moved to the next slide: Cassie, splayed across the rack of a stag, jumped onto the overhead screen. "After all, he's already got one admirer."

As the trainees filed out he spotted Alana Bloom lurking at the back of his classroom. He hadn't seen or heard from her since their awkward run in after he had been sexually harassed by that tailor...speaking of that tailor, he wondered what Hannibal did to him or if he had done anything to him yet. The man did tell him to think no more on it, but Will wondered if the man had been fed to him.

"Hi, Will." Alana greeted him with a weirdly shy smile.

"Hello."

"How are you?"

"I'm good thanks." He replied before going back to packing up his briefcase.

"That may change. I didn't want this to be ambush-"

"This is an ambush?" Will frowned.

"Ambush is later. Immediately later, soon to now. When Jack arrives consider yourself ambushed." She rambled and immediately after she finished speaking Jack entered, navigating his way through the last of the trainees.

"Here's Jack." Will sighed.

"How was class?" Jack asked.

"They applauded, it was inappropriate." He scowled.

“Review board begs to differ. You’re up for a commendation and they okayed active return to the field.” Ah that explains why Jack was here.

“I spoke with HR this morning.” Will interjected as Alana opened her mouth. “Darren said he would speak to you about the changes in my contract.”

“He did.” Jack looked disgruntled.

“Then so long as you abide by my contract then I am fine with going back into the field.” Will shrugged.

“I want you to go back in the field, but I told the Board I'm recommending a psych evaluation.”

“And who do you have planned to do it?” Will sighed resigned before looking at Alana. “Is it with you?”

“No.” She shook her head.

“We thought that Hannibal Lecter-”

“Let me stop you there.” Will held up his hand as he interrupted Jack. “Hannibal has already told you that he is unable to ethically provide you any psychological profiles on me, so why do you think that he would do my eval?”

“He what?!” Alana exclaimed.

“Hannibal is my partner, it would be morally wrong for him to treat me in a professional capacity.” Will tilted his head confused. “I could have sworn that I told you already that I was dating the man.”

“You did but…” She trailed off with a blush.

“But you didn’t believe me.” Will finished with a long suffering sigh. “Look. I am willing to be an active field consultant or whatever but if you need me to do a psych eval please arrange it to be with someone that I am not on friendly,” He looked at Alana, “Or romantic terms with.”

“Well it's not exactly a formality…”Jack hedged. “It's so I can sleep. I asked you to get close to Hobbs and I need to know you didn't get too close. How many times have you spent the night in Abigail Hobbs' hospital room?”

“That’s irrelevant but like I said, you want me to get a psych eval? Find me someone I don’t know.” And with that Will left the classroom. He had about an hour or so until his next class and he wanted to eat the delicious looking lunch that Hannibal had packed him before he had left that morning.

By three o’clock on the same day, Will had an appointment with a Dr Ken Jeong. The appointment was for five o’clock on the same day so Will turned up and was bemused to handed a piece of paper and then ushered out of the room. He had been rubbered stamped. Jack was going to be pleased.

Will: Do you know a Dr Ken Jeong?

Hannibal: the psychologist? Yes. why?

Will: he’s just rubber stamped me without even saying a word. I’m not sure whether to be thankful or concerned.

Hannibal: Hmm. That wasn’t very ethical of him.

Will could practically see the man frowning at his phone.

Hannibal: Submit the form he gave you but if you do find that you do need therapy then please let me know. I will find you a suitable therapist.

Will: I don't think I will be taking you up on that offer but thank you.

Hannibal: You are welcome darling.

Hannibal: say hello to your dogs from me.

Hannibal: I will look up how to make dog treats for when I next visit your place to properly meet your pack.

Will felt his stomach do a weird flip. It was amazing at how much his fake boyfriend cared. No one had ever made such an effort with his dogs before.

Will: I will.

Will: I would like that thank you.

Will: Will you be free this weekend?

Hannibal: I should be, but I will have to check my schedule.

Hannibal: I would look now but my next client is due.

Will: Okay, well let me know.

Will: Get home safe

Hannibal: I will and you too, darling.

Not A Fun Guy

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Unfortunately they snagged a case before the weekend which meant that Will would most likely be working through it. He frowned as he climbed out of his car at the scene or well outside of the scene. It was a dense looking woods with a clearing that held the crime scene that they had been called to having been discovered by some preteen explorers. They certainly found more than squirrels. Jack met him at the police tape.

“Dr Jeong cleared you.” Jack was more smug than he had any right to be seeing as Dr Jeong hadn’t actually said two words to Will nor had Will even had the chance to open his mouth before being rubber stamped.

“Well I’m in the field so you got what you wanted.” Will sighed and just wished that the man would let him get on with his job.

Thankfully Jack must have realised that Will wanted to get on with things. “Local police found more small animal traps in the surrounding woods. They even discovered a thirty gallon drum of pesticide hidden in a hollow tree along with a rusted Radio Flyer wagon.”

“Didn't want his "crop" disturbed.” Will eyed the shallow graves. It was set up as if it was a farm but clearly this farmer wasn’t growing tomatoes.

“All that's missing is a scarecrow.”

They approached Katz, Zeller and Price, behind them, the FBI'S CSI team worked to carefully unearth the three remaining buried victims from their shallow graves.

“Seven bodies, various stages of decay, all very well fertilized.” Beverly told them as she reached into a grave containing a partially uncovered, fungus ravaged corpse. It’s eyes, mouth and nose was covered in duct tape. The corpse’s palms were filled with black soil

which was very different from the brown clay walls of the grave. “He buried them in a high-nutrient compost. He was enthusiastically encouraging decomposition.” She continued.

“Patient way to dispose of a body.” Price quipped.

“They were buried alive with the intention of keeping them that way. At least for a little while.” Zeller added.

“Long enough for the fungus to eat any distinguishing features and make it nearly impossible to tell how long they'd been in the ground.”

“Line and rebar were to administer intravenous fluids after burial. He was feeding them something.” Zellar pointed to a catheter in the victim's outstretched arm, which Will now noticed was supported by a section of rebar.

“No restraints? They weren't bound? Nothing to stop them crawling out?” Will frowned. How was the killer keeping them from escaping?

“Nope, Just dirt.” Price informed him

Beverly pulled a tiny brush from the kit on her belt. She cleared the debris from under the corpse's nose and pulled back the duct tape revealing a breathing tube jammed into its nostrils.

“The other end of the air supply system comes up over there.” Katz pointed to somewhere behind Will.

He turned and saw that there was a small umbrella. He pulled on a pair of rubber gloves before picking up the umbrella to uncover an exposed piece of tubing sticking out of the ground.

“It isn't a very considerate clean air solution, which clearly wasn't a priority. Cause he's not lazy.”

“No, he's not.” Will stared at the corpse in the garden grave with narrowed eyes.

“Let's clear the scene.” Jack ordered before herding Zeller, Price, and Beverly, along with straggling E.M.T.s and local police out of the clearing and back into the surrounding woods, away from Will and the graves.

Now alone, Will took a deep calming breath, the smell of mulch and decay filling his nose before he exhaled and closed his eyes. He fell into the mind of the farmer. All but one of the exposed graves were recovered with the burlap sacks. Next to that open grave is the radio flyer wagon overflowing with moist, black dirt. He opened his eyes and stepped back to the edges of the clearing.

He sways as he becomes the farmer.

“I choose this man. I do not bind his arm or legs as I bury him in a shallow grave. He is alive but will never be conscious again.” He watched as he shoved the oxygen tube up the nose of the naked man in the shallow grave before he climbed out and loaded the shovel with compost from the wagon. He dumps the dirt into the grave covering the man. “He won't know he's dying. I don't need him to. This is my design.”

There is a noise that startles him out of his trance and suddenly he is Will Graham once more and not the farmer. He was standing over one of the open graves. In the grave is a man, covered morbidly in vibrant fungus and mold. Will frowned wondering what had pulled him from his trance when suddenly a fungus covered hand grabbed Will by the wrist, a rattled, wet gasp signaled a sharp in-take of air.

Oh shit. “He’s still alive!” Will yelled. “We have a live one!”

Immediately the paramedics swarmed the scene again, gently pushing Will out of the way. He stood back back and rubbed the wrist that had been grabbed, his skin crawling from the contact. He wanted a shower.

As he made his way back to his car, ducking under the police tape, he spotted vibrant red hair in the crowd of onlookers. His mind instantly jumped to the stray red hair from the Hobbs' cabin. Freddie Lounds. He sighed and wondered if he should bother informing the police guarding the scene about the woman but eventually decided against it. He didn't doubt that the woman would find a way to get the information anyway and it was probably for the best that he didn't bring her attention on himself.

Once in his car, Will pulled out his phone and stared at it for a moment. He should just go home, feed and play with his dogs and shower. He really wanted a shower. And yet...He really wanted to hear Hannibal's voice. Before he could change his mind he sent the man a text.

Will: Are you free this evening?

Will: I would like to cook for you.

He had caught some nice fish yesterday after his brief appointment with Dr Jeong. He had yet to cook for Hannibal while the man had cooked for him twice.

Hannibal: That sounds lovely.

Hannibal: What time do you want me?

Will smiled at his phone.

Will: What time do you finish work? He didn't want the man to feel like he had to rush over and Will would also need some time to buy some groceries to make something to go with the fish.

Hannibal: I finish at 6 this evening.

Hannibal: I could be at yours for 7?

Will: sounds good. Then he hesitated before sending another text.

Will: bring an overnight bag. I would prefer it if you didn't have to drive home late.

That was okay right? He had stayed at Hannibal's and they were friends. Friends who had shared a bed and got off together but friends nonetheless. Also if they were going to do this fake dating thing properly then Hannibal needed to meet his dogs.

Hannibal: I would be honoured to spend the night with you.

Will shoved down the butterflies that hatched in his stomach and turned on his engine and pulled away from the crime scene. He needed to do some shopping and decide what else he was going to serve with the fish...maybe steak fries like he said when they had first met. Gods it felt like years ago that they met in a dark parking lot in the middle of nowhere to dispose of corpses. He was now fake dating the Chesapeake Ripper. It was just utterly ridiculous what his life had become.

Seven o'clock arrived faster than Will wanted. He had managed to clean his house, especially the living room where his bed lived and he had made sure to hoover the only settee in the house so that Hannibal would have a fur free place to sit. He had let his dogs out for the entire time he was cleaning so that they would wear themselves out and be less hyper when Hannibal arrived. He really didn't want some of the bigger dogs trying to jump at him, it would ruin his suit.

The fish was gutted, filleted and seasoned. He wrapped it in baking paper and it was cooking in the oven with his attempt at steak fries. He had also managed to put together a simple salad. It should all be ready by the time that Hannibal arrived. He buried the thought that he was the wife preparing dinner for his husband when he returned home from work. He was not Hannibal's wife, they were only fake dating after all.

Just before seven o'clock he heard Hannibal's Bentley pull up outside and moments later there was a knock at the door. Will forced himself to take a deep breath. He didn't know why he was feeling so flustered. It was just Hannibal.

“Hi,” Will sounded breathless when he opened the door. He tried not to frown at how he was acting, seriously he needed to get a hold of himself!

“Thank you for having me, darling.” Hannibal brought a bouquet out from behind his back. “Some Sweet Williams, for a sweet William.”

“I- ah.” Will floundered. He had never been given flowers before. “Thank you?” He accepted the bouquet which was of course in a vase as well which was fortunate as he did not have anything to put them in. They were a mixture of pinks, white and purple small flowers with darker colouring towards the middle of the flower. They were pretty. He elected to ignore the comment about him being sweet.

“You are welcome, darling.” Hannibal smiled slightly.

“Oh come on in.” Will stood back to let him in. “The dogs are currently behaving but I’m sure that they will be on you as soon as they realise that you’re a new person.”

“I have also brought the treats that I mentioned. “ Hannibal held up a small paper bag. “It's just some sausage that I made myself.”

“From a pig you hunted?” Will asked as he wondered if it was safe for his dogs to eat human meat.

“Not this time, I thought it might have been rude to assume that it would be alright to feed them long pig without your permission.”

T-that was actually pretty decent of him. “Thanks.” Will smiled at him over his shoulder as he placed the vase of flowers on his fireplace mantel. It would be safe up there out of his dogs’ reach.

He heard the clicking of claws on the wooden floor as his dogs realised that there was a stranger in their home and said stranger had treats. Will turned to watch the scene.

Hannibal was surrounded by dogs, Zoe and Harley were at the front of the pack while Buster and Harley were circling him. Jack and Max stood behind Zoe and Ellie while Winston moved to sit at Will's feet. He, as the newest addition, was more skittish around the stranger in their home.

"Well hello," Hannibal greeted the dogs. "Now if I remember correctly, you are Zoe." Zoe barked at the sound of her name. "And you are Ellie." Ellie also barked. "And behind you would be Jack and Max?" At Will's nod he continued on more confidently. "Which means that the two circling me are Buster and Harley."

"That's correct." Will was impressed that he had gotten all of the dogs correct.

"Excellent." Hannibal preened before dolling out small pieces of homemade sausage. The dogs happily chowed down on the treats. Then he carefully made his way towards Will and Winston. "And this must be Winston." What further endeared Hannibal to Will was the fact that Hannibal crouched down to be on the same eye level as Winston to offer the treat.

Winston tentatively took the treat before retreating to his own bed. The rest of the dogs were also rather good and settled where they were. It did mean that they cluttered the floor and that they had to step over them to get to the kitchen but they were behaving which was the most important thing.

"Thank you." Will said to Hannibal again once they were in the kitchen.

"It was no trouble." Hannibal stared at Will.

"So um I made fish and steak fries."

"Ah the meal you said we shared on the night we met."

“You remember.”

“Of course I do.” Hannibal’s gaze became even more intense. “It was the most fascinating night I have had in a long time.”

Will could flushed and used the excuse that he needed to get the food out of the oven to get his blush under control.

“Anyway, I invited you over today because we picked up a new case and I wasn’t sure when I would next be free.” Will told him as he plated the food. “Oh, what would you like to drink?” He asked a moment later as he realised he had yet to offer him a drink.

“Whatever you are having will be fine.”

“Water with dinner then, whiskey later.” Will nodded to himself and set the plates on the small table in his kitchen. He pulled out two clean glasses and filled them with water before placing them on the table as well. The cutlery was already laid out, he did that earlier when he was cooking before Hannibal arrived.

“This looks lovely, darling.” Hannibal praised as he took his seat.

“Thanks.” Will turned his back to Hannibal to both hide his blush, damn it why was he blushing?, and to pull the salad from the fridge and some condiments. He wasn’t sure what Hannibal liked to dip his fries in. “Oh, I made the fries from scratch, I know how much you hate frozen bought things.”

“Thank you, sweet Will.”

They ate in a comfortable silence. Once the plates were cleared of food they retired into the living room on to the settee that Will had cleared of fur earlier with a glass of whiskey each.

“Was the food alright?” Will asked from his end of the settee.

“It was delicious, thank you. I especially enjoyed the fish. Your seasoning was perfect.”

“Well if there is one thing I know how to cook, its fish.” Will sipped his drink before finally asking the question that had been on his mind for a while. “What did happen with the tailor in the end?”

“Tailor?” Hannibal echoed confused.

“You know, the one you said you would take care of.”

“Ah.” Hannibal’s face cleared. “Well, you ate some of him in the sandwiches before the opera we saw.”

“Okay.” Will nodded easily accepting that Hannibal had murdered a man for him. “Anyway, you might find my current case interesting.” He changed the subject, content now that he had answers.

“Oh?”

“Someone made a mushroom farm with living humans as the fertilisers. Obviously they did die eventually but there was a survivor. I’m not entirely sure if they were able to save him seeing as he was covered in mushrooms and other fungi.”

“You could say that your farmer isn't a fun guy to be around.” Hannibal said with a completely straight face.

“D-did you just? Was that a pun?” Will asked incredulously. He did have Hannibal down as a guy who made awful puns. Then again he did give him Sweet William flowers…

Hannibal just smiled behind his glass.

“You are terrible.” Will chuckled leaning down to lift Zoe up on his lap as she wandered over to him.

“Indeed.”

Chapter End Notes

I now have a facebook group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/978892529311873

There isn't Mushroom on here

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will was disappointed when he woke up to the smell of bacon. Normally he would be rather pleased to be woken by such a delicious smell so why was he upset about it that morning? Because it meant that Hannibal was not in bed with him.

You're being silly, he told himself sternly. Hannibal and he were fake dating, not actually dating and even if they were dating, it didn't mean that Hannibal had to stay in bed with him until they were both awake. With that in mind he forced himself from the bed and sleepily made his way to the bathroom, his bladder making itself known once he had started moving.

"Good morning." Hannibal called out to him as he slunk past. "I've already let your dogs out and fed them."

"T-anks and G'morning." Will grumbled back before locking himself in the bathroom and doing his morning absolutions.

Feeling more awake and less conflicted about waking up without his fake boyfriend plastered to him, Will made his way into the kitchen to find a feast laid out on the small table.

"How?" He stared shocked at the amount of food. "I didn't know I had this much food in the house."

"You didn't." Hannibal admitted. "I woke up rather early and made a quick run to a supermarket."

"You didn't have to do that, Hannibal." Will wasn't sure how to feel about that.

"Perhaps not, but I wanted to." Hannibal pulled out a chair for him. "Now, please sit and eat."

“Thank you.” Will sighed and sat down. He felt slightly underdressed as he was still in his sleepwear while Hannibal was fully dressed in his suit and tie and looking fantastic as usual.

“What do you have planned for your day?” Hannibal asked as he took his own seat.

“Well, I’ll need to head into the lab to find out what they’ve discovered from the bodies.” Will said before taking his first mouth full of the delicious breakfast spread. “God this is good.”

“I’m glad.” Hannibal looked smug. “Do you think you will have time to go with me to visit Abigail later today?”

“Yes, I planned to drop by at some point this evening.”

“Excellent, shall we aim for five o’clock?”

“Sure, I’ll meet you there.”

They finished eating while chatting about the weather of all things.

“It is heading towards winter, do you get much snow out here?” Hannibal asked.

“Yeah, it's nice.” Will nodded. “It's a bit of a pain to dry the dogs off everytime they come back in the house though.”

“Do you have snow chains for your car?”

“Yeah, you?”

“No, the snow never seems to settle much in Baltimore.” Hannibal admitted. “But I will have to invest in some.”

“Oh?”

“Well it wouldn’t be safe to drive out to you without any.” He was implying that their fake relationship would still be going strong through winter? Wow, Will thought amazed, Hannibal was really committed to this alibi thing.

“I guess.” He settled on saying as he cleared his plate and stood to do the dishes.

“I have to get going,” Hannibal crept up behind him and wrapped iron strong arms around his waist. Will stiffened in surprise, what was Hannibal doing?!

“Uh.” Will blinked dumbly but relaxed into Hannibal’s arms. This kind of made up for not waking in Hannibal’s arms...not that it mattered! There was a soft brush of lips against the side of his neck before Hannibal moved away leaving Will feeling bereft.

“See you later, darling.” Hannibal gave him a fond look before making his way to the front door.

Will just stood frozen at the sink for a moment before leaving the dishes and moving to show Hannibal out. “How a good day at work.”

“You as well, Sweet Will.”

“Looks like he’s been soaking in glucose.” Zeller comments.

Will stood with Zeller and Price over the examination table wearing gloves, aprons, and splash shields. The man on the table in front of them was the man that had still been alive at the scene. Unfortunately he died on the way to the hospital.

“What exactly has he been soaked in?” Will asked leaning closer to the body.

Price picked up a clip board and read out “A highly concentrated mixture of hardwoods, shredded newspaper, and pig poop.” He put it back down. “Perfect for growing mushrooms and other fungi.”

“It wasn't the mushrooms but kidney failure that was the cause of death.” Zeller said as he recovered the victim. Behind him, the other victims laid on tables of their own, each covered by a sheet.

Katz entered carrying fists-full of I.V. bags. “Dextrose in all the catheters. He probably used some kind of dialysis or peristaltic to pump fluids after the circulatory systems broke down.”

“Force-feeding them sugar water.” Will commented with a thoughtful look. Kidney failure...force fed sugar water...

“You know who loves sugar water? Mushrooms.” Price chirped far too cheerfully for the situation. “They crave it. As much as a mushroom can crave anything.”

“Recovering alcoholics also crave sugar.” Zeller paused before adding, “Don't take that personally.”

“I'm not recovering.”

“Feed sugar to fungus in your body, the fungus makes alcohol. It's friends helping friends really.”

“Is someone preying on recovering alcoholics? Other than themselves?” Price asked

“Alcoholics aren't the only ones with compromised endocrine systems.” Will points out. “They all died of kidney failure? Death by diabetic ketoacidosis?”

Katz turned to Zeller “Did you know they were diabetics?”

“We don't know they're diabetics.”

“They're all diabetics.” Will sighed. Wasn’t it obvious? “He induces a coma and puts them in the ground.”

“How is he inducing diabetic comas?” Katz asked.

“He changes their medication. He's a doctor or a pharmacist or works somewhere in medical services.” Will offered.

“So he buries them, feeds them sugar to keep them alive long enough for the circulatory systems to soak it up?” She summarizes.

“All so he can feed the mushrooms.” Price nodded

“We dug up his mushroom garden so what will he do next?” Zeller asked

“He'll want to grow a new one.” Will told him grimly. “We’ll need to make sure we catch him before he can take anyone else.”

Will and Jack strode towards a big box pharmacy while other agents dressed in black with bullet proof vests surrounded the building.

“Gretchen Speck.” Jack spoke as they walked. “Is the eighth diabetic customer of the chain to disappear after filling an insulin prescription, second from this exact location.

“The other seven?” What was it with serial killers and the number eight?

“All over the country. One pharmacist has been all over the county, too.”

“A floater.”

“Said Floater's floating right here.” Jack informs him. “Still logged into his work station.”

Jack walked confidently toward the Pharmacy counter with Will immediately behind him, as plain clothes agents herded the last of the customers and cashires out the door. Jack stepped behind the counter and calmly walked inside, holding his badge very clearly in front of him, instructing the six pharmacists

“Everyone. Stop what you're doing and put your hands in the air.” Jack ordered. The six pharmacists do as instructed, realizing there are many F.B.I. AGENTS pointing guns at them across the counter. “I'm Special Agent Jack Crawford. Which one of you is Eldon Stammets?”

“What's happening?” The Pharmacy Manager demanded to know.

“One of your customers didn't go to work this morning after picking up a prescription here yesterday, filled by Eldon Stammets. We have reason to believe he abducted her.”

“Eldon was just here. Just now.” The Manager paled as he informed them.

Jack signals the F.B.I. agents and they fan out to search for him.

“Is his car still in the parking lot?” Will asked, already moving towards the exit.

“Uh, yeah. It should be. He drives an old Ford Mustang, it's a bluish green colour.”

Will ran out into the parking lot and thankfully found the car quickly. He was followed by Jack and Zeller. He took off his leather jacket and wrapped it around his arm before smashing the window. His hand ached from the impact but thankfully didn’t feel broken. He reached through the window and popped the trunk. He hurried back around the car and lifted the trunk lid the rest of the way, it gave a grating creak.

“Shit Will.” Jack cursed as he broke the window. “If you’ve broken your hand…” He trailed off as the trunk opened. “

The trunk was completely filled with rich dark soil, the same that was found at the crime scene. There's a fleeting recoil as Will, Jack Crawford, and Brian Zeller were hit with the stench released from the compartment. Will recovered first and started shovelling arms-full of dirt.

“She's in here!” Will told them as he uncovered an unconscious, naked Gretchen Speck, an oxygen mask over her mouth and nose.

“E.M.T.s now.” Jack barked.

Will stepped away from the trunk as the E.M.T.s moved in. He watched as Gretchen Speck was loaded into the back of an ambulance by paramedics.

“We know his name. We know where he lives. We have his car. We'll have him within 24 hours.” Jack declared confidently.

Price approaches Jack and Will with some trepidation. “Jack. We just checked browser history at Stammets' workstation.”

“Do I want to hear this?” Jack sighed. Will suddenly had a bad feeling.

“No. And yes. But mostly no.”

Back in the PharmacyJack pulled up the internet browser to reveal a full screenshot of Will standing in the forest crime scene, head hung low. The headline reads:

TAKES ONE TO KNOW ONE

Zeller, Price and Katz are gathered around the monitor with Jack. Will didn’t want to know what was making Jack turn puce but Katz read it out anyway.

“‘The FBI isn’t just hunting psychopaths, they’re head-hunting them, too, offering competitive pay and benefits in the hopes of using one demented mind to catch an..’ She goes into a lot of detail.”

“Son-of-a-bitch.” Jack growled. “She won’t get away with this.”

Will wondered if Hannibal would be willing to be his alibi while he killed Freddie freaking Lounds.

Will was early but he arrived at the hospital to see Abigail. He sat silently in a chair at the side of the comatose Abigail’s bed before pulling out his phone.

Will: I'm at the hospital early. That sent, he put his phone away and sighed, his eyes fluttering shut.

Sometime later, Will felt himself being moved. He blinked blearily realising that he must have fallen asleep at some point. Then he noticed that it wasn't him that was moving but whatever he was lying on...The ceiling above him was moving quickly belaying how fast he was moving. He tried to sit up but was strapped down. Shit. He twisted his head trying to see what was going on but froze when he saw Abigail strapped down next to him. He was surprised that he hadn't noticed her earlier as they were rather squished together on the gurney.

"What the hell?" He finally exclaimed. "Where are you taking us?"

"Shit." An unknown man cursed. "You weren't supposed to wake up yet."

"Well I have." Will shot back as their kidnapper hurried through the hospital faster. He squirmed, trying to reach his gun. He managed to lift his head enough to see his kidnapper. Eldon Stamments. "What are you going to do with us?"

"We evolved from mycelium. I plan to reintroduce you to the concept."

"By burying us alive?" Will kept him talking as he finally managed to wrap his hand around his gun at his hip which was pressed against Abigail's making it harder to pull it out.

"Opisthokonts. A super kingdom of animalia and fungi together. That journalist said you understood me."

"I don't."

“You will.” Stamments claimed confidently. “Walk into a field of mycelium, they know you're there. Their spores reach for you when you pass by. I know who you're reaching for. So I’m going to plant you both so she can finally reach back.”

They were reaching the Hospital’s back doors when Will was finally able to pull his gun. He waited until Stamments had his back to him as he turned to open the door.

BLAM!

Stamments body jerked as the bullet hit him in the back. He dropped the floor. Will didn’t care if he was dead or not as at the sound of the gunshot people came running. He relaxed against the gurney as he spotted Hannibal leading the way towards him. Hannibal started to unstrap him as the medics moved to Stamments.

“Will!” He relaxed against the gurney at the sound of Hannibal’s voice. He twisted his head and spotted Hannibal leading a group of medics and police towards him.

“Hey,” Will greeted him. “I would give you a hug but I’m a little tied up at the moment.”

Hannibal started to unstrap him as the medics moved to Stamments. “Are you alright?” He asked, sounding the most worried Will had ever heard.

“Yeah, a little groggy but otherwise okay.” Will reassured him. He hated seeing Hannibal so tense. “It was a good thing you didn’t arrive early too because there wasn’t mushroom left on this gurney.”

“And you said my pun was bad.” Hannibal sighed but his shoulders relaxed which was Will’s intention.

Abigail was returned to her room and rehooked up to her machines; Stamments didn't die from the gunshot wound but he did need surgery before he was taken into custody; and Will was thankfully allowed home after being checked over.

"Can I stay over yours again, darling?" Hannibal asked as they walked to the parking lot.

"Uh sure." Will didn't have a problem with it although he wasn't sure why Hannibal wanted to stay over again.

"Thank you." Hannibal smiled softly and threaded his hand through Will's. His hand was warm and strong in his. Will's stomach fluttered at the gesture but he sternly reminded himself that as they were in public, Hannibal was merely acting the part of a concerned boyfriend. He didn't know why that thought made his chest hurt.

Chapter End Notes

I now have a facebook group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/978892529311873 come say hi!

For Want of a Lazy Morning

Will was cuddled up in bed with Hannibal wrapped around him when there was a knock on his door. He frowned as he hadn't heard any cars pulling up. He sighed and untangled himself from Hannibal. Hannibal grumbled in his sleep and adorably clutched Will's pillow to his chest. A serial killer had no right to look that cute. Dressed in only his boxers and t-shirt, he opened the door. His dogs poured out of the house around his legs and he came face to face with Alana.

"Morning." She greeted him with a smile.

"I didn't hear you drive up." Will frowned, squinting in the daylight. He was still rather sleepy and wanted to get back into bed with Hannibal. Yesterday was rather eventful after all.

"It's a hybrid. An excellent car for stalking." She teased. "Can I come in? I wanted to check on you, I heard about what happened."

"Sure, I'll stick on a robe." Will shrugged and led the way back into the house. He would leave the dogs outside for a bit, they were generally good and knew to stay in sight of the house.

"It's fine, I have brothers." Alana commented as she followed him. She seemed to be rather more relaxed than the last time he had seen her.

"Darling?" A sleepy head popped out of the covers of Will's bed in his living room.

"We have a guest." Will informed him as he grabbed a robe. He wished that Alana wasn't here but it also meant that they would have to perform as boyfriends seeing as they were fake dating.

"Who?" Hannibal blinked slowly at him. God, Hannibal was too cute when sleepy.

“Alana.”

Hannibal groaned quietly before sitting up, the duvet sliding down to reveal his hairy chest. The man had foregone wearing a shirt to bed as he complained that Will’s house was too warm. Will had offered to sleep on the couch instead as he knew he ran hot but Hannibal had waved away the offer. It was a rather novel experience to sleep with his head on a hairy chest, it was like cuddling with a giant, warm teddy bear. Will couldn’t help but hope that Hannibal would decide to sleep topless more often...No, bad thoughts Will!

“Oh my!” Alana squeaked. She must have followed Will into the living room instead of waiting in the kitchen. Rude.

“Could you wait in the kitchen, please?” Will fought hard not to scowl at her. He hated the idea of her being about to see Hannibal like this. He was so relaxed and adorably sleepy...He suddenly had the urge to throw her out of his house.

“Of course.” Her voice was still higher than normal but she did turn around and leave the room.

“I have a spare robe.” Will turned to Hannibal and saw that he was still sitting up on the bed and making no effort in covering up his chest.

“Thank you, I do believe that I will take you up on it.” He blinked slowly.

“Take your time, I’ll get the coffee going.” Will told him as he pulled on his own robe and dug out the spare one for Hannibal.

Hannibal hummed in response as he climbed out of the bed. Will’s eyes were drawn to him as he bent over to pick up his shirt that he had rather uncharacteristically left on the floor after he had taken it off last night. Will tore his eyes away from his arse and forced himself to leave the room with the robe wrapped loosely so as not to show his body’s reaction.

Once in the kitchen he ignored Alana for the moment and went straight for the coffee machine, a monstrosity that Hannibal had brought with him yesterday. It had already been in the man's car and apparently he had intended to give it to him later that week but seeing as Will hadn't exactly been in the right state of mind, he had seen it as he climbed into Hannibal's bentley. It required a lot of his concentration to work so Alana would have to wait.

By the time he had managed to get it working to make him coffee, Hannibal waltzed into the kitchen looking ridiculously good in Will's spare robe.

"Good morning, Alana." He greeted his guest. "To what do we owe the pleasure of your visit?"

"I heard about what happened yesterday and wanted to check if Will was okay." Will watched as her eyes darted between them. "Seems like I didn't have to worry."

"Perhaps not, but we appreciate it all the same."

It wasn't missed by anyone that Hannibal said 'we' meaning that he spoke for the both of them, that he and Will were close enough for him to speak for the both of them. It felt oddly like Hannibal was trying to stake his claim on Will which he couldn't possibly as he has nothing to be jealous of. They were only fake dating after all.

"Here." Will handed over one of the cups of coffee to Hannibal and then another to Alana. "If it's no good, blame him." He gestured to Hannibal with a nod of his head. "He got me that monstrous thing and refused to show me how to use it more than once."

"It really isn't that complicated, darling."

"Says you."

“You have my utmost faith that this will taste delicious.” Hannibal lifted the cup to his lips and took a sip while staring directly at Will. His tongue darted out to lick up the coffee that lingered on his lips. “Delicious.”

Will swallowed harshly and dragged his focus away from Hannibal’s luscious mouth. He blew on his own cup and tentatively took a sip. Damn the man, the monstrous coffee maker did indeed make better coffee than his old one.

“I have to confess that I didn’t just come here to see if you were alright.” Alana piped up bringing everyone’s attention back to her.

“Oh?” Hannibal raised an eyebrow and leant against Will’s counter top.

“Abigail woke up.”

“I’ll go get my coat.” Will put his cup down and moved to go back to the living room.

“Darling, you will also need to get dressed.” Hannibal called after him.

“Or we could just sit here and drink coffee.” Alana suggested.

Will froze midstep. “You don’t want me to see her.”

“Eventually. It could help to take a step back before a step forward.”

“Help who?” Will frowned.

“When you see Abigail, and I do think you should see her, I want it to be on your terms. I want you to get what you need. I want Abigail to get what she needs. What Jack needs, I’m

not as concerned about."

"Who said anything about Jack?" Now Will was just confused.

"You mean he hasn't called you yet?"

"Mr Crawford is aware that he is not to contact Will out of work hours unless it is an emergency." Hannibal commented reminding them that he was there. "However, I do agree that we should perhaps wait a few hours before we visit." He turned to Will. "After all, she would have not long woken up from a coma, there will be all sorts of medical tests that she will have to go through first."

"Fine." Will's shoulders slumped and returned to where he had been standing next to Hannibal. "Abigail Hobbs doesn't have anyone." He couldn't help but point out.

"You can't be her everyone. Don't have to draw a line, but you might want to know where your line is." Alana shook her head and placed her cup down.

"You want me to keep my distance." Will replied bitterly and unconsciously leant against Hannibal for support. He was silently pleased when Hannibal wrapped his arm around his waist and pulled him closer. It was just for show but he appreciated it anyway.

"When I thought of why, it sounded insulting so I'll find another way to say it." She picked up her cup and took a sip.

"Say it the insulting way." Will sighed, bracing himself. He regretted letting her in.

"Dogs keep a promise a person can't."

"I'm not collecting another stray." Will shot back standing straight and glared at her.

“I told you it was insulting.” She tried to placate him.

“ I get it. I can trust a dog to be a dog, but I can’t trust Abigail Hobbs to be who I think she is.” He sneered.

“The first person Abigail talks to about what happened can’t be anyone who was there when it happened. That means no Dr. Lecter, either.” She glanced at the man who had been standing silently beside him.

“Much less the guy who killed her Dad.”

“I’m glad that you understand.” She smiled relieved not reading the room very well.

“I think you should leave.” Hannibal finally spoke up.

“What?” She recoiled.

“You need to leave.” Hannibal pulled himself up to his full height, tucking Will in close to his body. “Thank you for informing us that Abigail is awake but it is time for you to leave.”

“Very well,” She stood. “Please take my advice, Will. Don’t go and see Abigail yet.”

“Goodbye Alana.” Will and Hannibal walked her to the door.

As soon as she left, Will’s phone started to ring. He sighed when he saw that it was exactly nine o’clock in the morning and that the caller was Jack.

“What can I do for you Jack?” Will leant against the door frame as he answered the phone. He watched as Alana carefully pulled away from his house avoiding the dogs that were still in the yard.

“Abigail Hobbs is awake.”

“So I’ve been told.” He sighed and rubbed his eyes. “I’ve just had a visit from Alana telling me to stay away from the hospital until she gives the all clear.”

“Well, I want you to speak to her anyway.” Jack gave the thinly veiled order.

“I do need to go to the hospital to pick up my car.” Will agreed without explicitly saying so.

“Good.”

Will rolled his eyes when Jack hung up without saying goodbye. He bet the man wouldn’t have done that if he was calling Hannibal.

“Am I to assume that we will be going to see Abigail after all?” Hannibal asked calmly.

“Yes, but I think we’ll do as you suggested and wait a few hours.”

“And pray tell shall we do in the meantime?”

Will flushed at the dark tone in Hannibal’s voice and forced himself not to jump the man. They weren’t dating and so it would be inappropriate for him to do so. “I need to feed the dogs and my fish stock is getting low so…” He trailed off.

“If you wouldn’t mind, I would like to accompany you as you fish but as an observer this time.”

“Okay.” Will couldn’t refuse him.

After a relaxing morning fishing at his usual spot and a nice lunch, Will and Hannibal made their way into the hospital to visit Abigail. Hannibal had been rather quiet for most of the day seeming content to just sketch as Will fished before taking over the kitchen and cooking some of the freshly caught fish for lunch. It had been rather lovely.

Unfortunately his day could only go downhill from there.

As they approached Abigail’s room they could hear another two women talking.

“How did they catch him?”

“A man named Will Graham. Works for the FBI but isn’t FBI. He catches insane men because he can think like them. Because he is insane.”

Well the second voice was most definitely Lounds but what on earth was she doing here and who the hell thought it was a good idea to allow her to speak to Abigail?!

“Speak of the devil.” The red haired woman commented as Will and Hannibal were escorted into the room by two orderlies.

“Would you excuse us please?” Will asked Lounds more politely than he actually felt like being but he didn’t want to come across rude in front of Abigail before they were properly introduced.

“I’m not leaving you alone with her.” Lounds flipped her red hair at him.

Will nodded to the orderlies, who then flanked Freddie before he turned his attention to Abigail. “I’m Special Agent Will Graham.”

As Freddie was escorted to the door she tried to get in one last barb: “By Special Agent, he means not really an Agent. He didn’t get past the screening process.” She smirked at him. “Too unstable.”

“I must insist you leave the room.” Hannibal stepped between Lounds and Will, a looming but reassuring presence.

Freddie tried to offer Abigail a business card, “If you want to talk-” Will snatched the card without saying a word and Lounds finally leaves the room, allowing the orderlies to escort her out.

“Abigail, this is Doctor Lecter... Do you remember us?” Will asked now that the blasted journalist was gone.

“I remember you.” She nodded slowly before looking accusingly at Will. “You killed my dad.”

The statement hung there for a moment, a weighted memory. Will could see the moment clearly as if it was repeating before his eyes. He saw Garret Jacob Hobbs slashing at his daughter’s throat, he pulled the trigger again and again as the man just wouldn’t stop.

Hannibal’s voice pulls him back to the present. “You’ve been in a bed for a while, Abigail. Why don’t we have a walk?”

Cut to Fit

Abigail was balanced between the two men. She wasn't very steady on her feet but then again she had not long woken from a coma and Will questioned the brightness of their idea to take her for a walk. She did seem to relax slightly once they were out in the garden so that was a plus.

Hannibal was the first to break their silence as they strolled along the path. "I'm sorry we couldn't save your mother. We did everything we could, but she was already gone."

"I know. I saw him kill her." Tears glistened in her eyes but did not fall. Will felt proud of her for holding it together, for being so strong. It was admirable.

"You saw it?" Hannibal frowned slightly.

"Didn't seem real." She confessed. "He was loving right up until the second he wasn't. He kept telling me he was sorry and to just hold still. He was going to make it all go away."

"There was plenty wrong with your father, Abigail," Will told her strongly. "but there's nothing wrong with you. You said he was loving. I believe it. That's what you brought out in him." He did not want her to feel guilty. The sins of her father shouldn't be laid on her shoulders.

"It's not all I brought out in him." She said bitterly.

"Did he tell you about the young women he murdered?" Hannibal asked carefully.

Abigail goes silent.

“You don’t have to answer that right now, if you don’t want to.” He quickly reassures her after giving Hannibal a stern look. Now was not the time to push her.

“But we will have to ask you those questions eventually.” Hannibal points out making Will glower. He knows the man is right but he wished he wasn’t. None of this Abigail's fault and honestly neither he nor Hannibal were any better than her father, they were both murderers after all.

“I’m going to be messed up, aren’t I? I’m worried about nightmares.”

“We’ll help you with the nightmares.” Hannibal promised.

“There’s no such thing as getting used to what you experienced. It bothers me a lot.” Will tried to show that she isn’t alone in what she feels. “I can only imagine how it bothers you when I see it over and over in my mind.”

“Do you have nightmares about killing my dad?”

“Sometimes it’s hard for me to dream about much else.” He lied. He had honestly not dreamt about her father or killing him at all. In fact since he committed his first murder, the dog sitter, he hasn’t really had a nightmare. Sure he dreamt about Elise Nichols and her death but that was it and even then it wasn’t exactly nightmare esk, disturbing, yes, but not the usual calibre of his nightmares.

“Killing somebody, even if you have to do it, it feels that bad?”

“It's the ugliest feeling in the world.” Hannibal met Will’s eyes, knowing he lied. Abigail was silent as she digested Will’s words.

Will’s phone rang, breaking the tense silence.

“Jack?” He answered the phone with a frown. Why was the man calling him for a second time that day.

“There’s been a murder, we think its the Ripper.”

Will’s eyes darted over to Hannibal as he asked, “Where?”

Hannibal and Will pull up to Fabian’s Tailor. The shop is surrounded by police tape and crawling with CSI agents. Jack met them at the police tape.

“Will, Dr Lecter.” Jack nodded at the both of them and held up the tape so they could duck under it. “The vic was identified as Fabian Masters, the owner of the establishment. He was discovered by his assistant after lunch.”

“So he was killed and displayed during their lunch hour?” WIll asked as they entered the shop.

“No, apparently on Wednesdays they only open in the afternoon.”

“Ah.” Will nodded his understanding. Hannibal was like a silent protector behind him, shadowing his every move as they made their way towards the crime scene.

It was beautiful.

Mounted on the mannequin stand was the top half of Fabian's body. It was basically from his head to his hips, the lower half of his body was completely missing. His head was kept up straight by the tightly wrapped measuring tape around his neck. The skin of his chest and

stomach was cut open as if it was a suit jacket. There were pins keeping the flaps of skin in place as if it truly was a suit being made. His heart was missing but in its place was a bouquet of rather familiar flowers:Sweet Williams.

"Jack, we found the rest of him." Katz's voice jolted Will out of his staring and he followed her without Jack's say so. He was led out the back to the skip of leftover/waste material.

In the skip was Fabian's lower half, a pair of tailor scissors embedded in the groin.

Will managed to keep a straight face but inside he is filled with a dark pleasure. Hannibal killed for him.

"Well?" Jack asked as he came up behind him. "Is it the Ripper?"

"Yes." Will nodded. "this was done by the Chesapeake ripper."

When Will was allowed to leave the scene he left it with a silent Hannibal by his side. The man had been oddly quiet during the goings on and Will wanted to know why. He waited until they were in Hannibal's car before turning to him.

"Thank you." Will smiled genuinely. "I loved it."

"Now you know." Hannibal sighed.

"Pardon?"

"You know who I am."

"Hannibal, I've known since we first met." Will furrowed his brow as he spoke. Had the man been under the assumption that he was just the garden variety serial killer this entire time? It would certainly explain why he was so pensive at the scene.

"And even if I didn't know until now it's not like it would have changed anything between us. After all, I'm not entirely innocent either." He pointed out. It didn't stop him from fake dating the man.

"Thank you," Hannibal exhaled and relaxed in his car seat.

"For what?"

"For accepting me."

"Of course I accept you. I wouldn't let you sleep in my bed otherwise, fake dating or not." Will rolled his eyes. "Anyway, take me back to hospital, I still need to pick up my car."

"Only if you come back to mine." Hannibal bartered.

"Fine, but you are going to cost me a fortune in dog sitting fees."

"I can fix that."

"How?" Will raised an eyebrow skeptically at him but only got a happy hum in response before he started the car. "Alright keep your secrets but you do realise that Jack is going to be on my arse for this case right? He's always so frantic about catching the Ripper."

"Then perhaps we should give him something to focus on…" Hannibal's grin was all teeth when he stopped at a stop sign. "Did the display inspire you by any chance?"

“Who do you have in mind?” Will bit his lip. Was he going to do this? Sure he’s already killed but it had been on impulse, and yes he pointed Hannibal in the direction of the tailor but he hadn’t actually held the knife so to speak...Then he looked at how happy Hannibal was and well he found himself not wanting to upset or disappoint him. Maybe killing again wouldn’t be too hard? He had after all shot Hobbs to death and wounded Stamments.

“I have a rolodex of potential victims.” He admitted. “When we arrive at my place you can have a flick through and see if any stand out to you.”

“You have a rolodex of potential murder victims?” Will repeated incredulously.

“Yes, I take the business card of whomever is rude or annoys me and I add it to the rolodex for me to return to them at a later date.”

“Which is why we can never link you to the victims.” He was a little impressed.

“Exactly.”

After collecting his car from Abigail’s hospital and following Hannibal back to his house, he phoned the dog sitter. She was more than happy to check on his dogs for him as she needed the extra cash for college.

“I’ve arranged a dog sitter.” Will announced as he was met at the front door by Hannibal.

“Excellent.” He smiled lightly and led Will through to the kitchen. “Make yourself comfortable, I’ll go get the rolodex before starting on an early dinner for us.”

“Sounds good.” Will made his way to the fridge to see if Hannibal had any beer. He didn’t but he had this pretentious botanical soda. It would do. He grabbed two from the fridge, one for him and one for Hannibal.

He sat at the counter on one of the kitchen stools and using his keys he opened the bottle that was sealed just like a bottle of beer. This particular bottle was called ‘curiosity cola’ and tasted faintly of ginger. It was actually rather good and like everything else in Hannibal’s kitchen probably expensive to buy.

“Here we are.” Hannibal announced as he walked back into the kitchen a small box in his hand. “Take your time in choosing.” He placed it in front of him.

“Thanks,” Will pulled the box closer to himself while pushing the other bottle of soda towards Hannibal.

“Thank you darling.” Hannibal took the bottle and then used Will’s keys that he had left on the counter to open the bottle. He took a sip before placing it back on the counter and going to the fridge to get ingredients. “I shall leave you to it.”

Will opened the box and pulled out the rolodex and flicked through the cards occasionally asking questions.

“What did Regina George do?”

“Spilt coffee on me and refused to apologize.”

“Dr Rahul Mehra?”

“A former patient that had a tendency to stalk women. Harmless but terribly rude.”

“Mick Taylor?”

“A terrible contractor. Left my neighbours house in quite the state.”

“Lars Thorwald?”

“Animal abuser.”

“Then him. I chose him.” Will decided easily. Animal abusers were some of the worst people in the world, them and child abusers.

“Excellent choice.” Hannibal complimented as he started frying something. “Take the card from the rolodex, and then if you could put the rolodex back on my desk in the study that would be most helpful, darling.”

“Sure.”

Hannibal made a rich dinner of Veal Piccata with brown rice spaghetti in a tomato sauce and a baby arugula salad with shaved pecorino romano and a white balsamic vinaigrette. It was more pretentious than the soda but equally delicious. They ate in silence.

“Now,” Hannibal broke the silence once they had both put their cutlery down. “I think it would be best if I retrieved the man and then have you join me once he is restrained.”

“You don’t kill on site?”

“No, I have a…” He trailed off. “It would be easier to just show you.” He stood and collected the dishes. Will hurried to help him. “Thank you darling, just put them in the sink, I’ll sort them later.”

Will did as he was asked.

“Now if you will follow me?” Hannibal led him through the kitchen to a room that Will had assumed was his pantry. It was indeed a pantry but Hannibal knelt on the ground and there must have been a hidden switch as suddenly he was able to pull up a hidden trap door that there had been no sign of moments ago.

“This is becoming rather cinematic villianish.” Will sassed as he followed the man down the stairs to what was a literal murder basement.

It was like a scene out of a horror movie. Tiled floor and walls and a couple of what looked like operation tables with restraints. There was a drain in the floor so the ground must be sloped. It was all rather clinical, clean and smelt faintly of bleach. Next to the staircase that led down into the basement was a peg with a plastic body suit on it.

“I’ll have to find one of my spare bodysuits for you.”

“You have a murder basement and a murder suit.” Will said dryly.

“For forensic measures.” Hannibal defended looking like a ruffled cat. It was unfairly adorable.

“Suuurrre.” Will drawled with a smirk.

Hannibal huffed before he brought the conversation back to what they had been discussing upstairs. “So I will collect our rude pig and bring him down here. He will merely be sedated. You will then be free to do what you please with him.”

“What will we do with him afterwards?”

“I was thinking that we could display him in a manner similar to the Ripper but different enough for you to be able to realistically claim that it wasn’t.”

“That means you can’t harvest anything from him.”

“You are correct.”

Will stood silently, taking in the murder basement and the direction that he had taken his life in. He was on his way to being a serial killer, was fake dating another serial killer and yet he couldn’t imagine his life without Hannibal at his side.

“Okay, go get our pig.”

“With pleasure, my sweet William.” Hannibal theatrically bowed. “I shouldn’t be more than half an hour.” Then he left.

Will waited in the murder basement for him to return and tried to ignore how warm he felt at being called 'sweet William' like the flowers he had been gifted previously and the ones that were left at the Ripper scene.

Dirty Hands

While Will waited for Hannibal to return with the pig he wondered how he should kill him. It had to be eye-catching enough to get Jack's attention but it also had to be different enough from a Ripper's kill...So what would Will's design be? He paced for a few minutes before his eyes caught sight of the murder suit.

"Might as well get ready." He murmured aloud and pulled the suit from its peg. "Hannibal can wear the spare one." He pulled on the plastic suit, grimacing at the feel of it. It was weird and clung to his clothes underneath it. It was like wearing a packmac but all over, and he hated packmacs. He wrinkled his nose but knew he would just have to put up with it.

Now back to the matter at hand, how would he kill the piece of scum that Hannibal would be bringing to him like a cat that caught a mouse for its owner...He should probably come up with a different analogy as Will did not own Hannibal. Was it weird that he felt bad that Hannibal would be unable to take any organs from the pig? The man was after all going out of his way to get the pig for him, had even created a murder scene for the man that groped him too. It just felt rude not to pay him back somehow but how could he? He thought back on all he read about previous Chesapeake Ripper kills. There was always an organ missing…

Blood.

What if they drained this pig of blood? Hannibal could use it to make blood pudding or something provided that they wouldn't catch any diseases from it. It would also be different enough from a Ripper kill that it would stand out. Maybe Hannibal would know best how to do it, but the more that Will thought about it the more he liked it.

Will heard the trap door scrap open and footsteps. He turned and watched as Hannibal easily made it down the stairs with a body over his shoulder. God he was so strong. No, Will focus, you are here for murder do not oogle your fake boyfriend. Hannibal dumped the body onto one of the operation tables with a grunt.

"Have you thought about what you want to do?" He asked as he stepped back and took in the fact that Will was dressed in the murder suit already.

“I want to drain him of his blood.” Will confessed stepping closer to the unconscious man, his eyes on Hannibal. “I’m sure you can whip up a few dishes with blood as an ingredient...providing he has no diseases.”

“Oh you are marvellous.” Hannibal sounded breathless but Will chalked that up to lugging around an unconscious man.

“Er thanks?” Will shook off the compliment. “I figured that you would know the best way to do it.”

“We’ll hang him by his feet and with his throat cut. The blood will drain from him and into a bucket.” Hannibal explained.

“Do I cut his throat before or after we hang him up?” He asked but answered his own question. “I’ll do it after he’s been hung up, that way there won’t be any blood wasted.”

“Indeed.” Hannibal smiled and tied the man’s feet together.

Will moved closer to the man that he was going to kill and amused to noticed that it was the man that had shoved him out of the way in the shop. “What a small world.” He murmured.

“Darling?”

“Oh, It's just.” Will gestured at the soon to be dead man. “This man was rather rude to me in a supermarket the day after we met. He shoved me to get a place at the checkout.”

“Then it was rather fortuitous that it was him that you chose to kill.” Hannibal sounded calm but the way he tightened the ropes around the man’s ankles betrayed his anger.

“I was thinking…” Will had a sudden thought. “What if we don’t hide that this is a ripper kill. But we only display it when we’re about to go with Abigail to visit her home? As I imagine that Jack will approve the trip.” As he spoke the more he liked the idea. “It would further cement in Jack’s eyes anyway, that we couldn’t have anything to do with the ripper because we would be out of state…”

“An excellent idea.” Hannibal agreed. “Once we have him drained of blood I’ll put him in the freezer to prevent decomposition.”

It took the both of them to lift the man onto the meat hook that was hung from the ceiling and Will had to try rather hard to avoid staring at Hannibal’s strong forearms. Once he was secure, Will walked across the basement to where Hannibal had a set of knives in various sizes. He picked up a boning knife, it felt familiar in hand as he often used one when cleaning his fish. It would be perfect for the job. He tested the weight of it in his hand as he walked back over to the body.

Will made eye contact with Hannibal, deep maroon eyes stared back, pupils blown wide open. He licked his lips before crouching next to the body and with one hand he grasped the man’s oily hair. He grimaced at the feeling, it felt greasy even through the gloves he wore. He pulled the head back, baring the throat.

“One moment darling.” Hannibal interrupted and slid a large bowl under the head. “We wouldn’t want to waste any.” He stepped back. “He’s all yours.”

Will didn’t need any further encouragement. His heart was pounding in his ears and his breathing had sped up, he trembled where he was crochet, his muscles tensing and relaxing. He was scared and yet incredibly excited. This was the first time that he was going to kill someone without it being explained away. When he murdered his Dog groomer, it was on an impulse. He killed Hobbs to protect Abigail. Now he was going to kill this man in cold blood. He was part way to becoming a serial killer. He couldn’t find it in himself to regret it.

It was easier than it should have been, Will mused as the knife cut through the flesh of Lars Thorwald’s throat like a hot knife through butter. Hot, wet, red blood spurted from the wound, hitting Will’s face as he finished cutting across the throat. The wound looked like a mockery of a smile. He pulled the head back harsher as the body thrashed in it’s death throws despite the fact that the man was drugged unconscious. He brought the knife back to the wound and cut deeper, through muscle and the windpipe until his knife struck bone. He then

let go of the head and stood back up and stepped away from the body, watching the blood poured from the cut.

“It's like some demented water feature.” He commented as Hannibal approached him.

“Magnificent.” Hot breath tickled his ear as Hannibal loomed behind him.

They stood there for a few minutes, just watching the body bleed into the bowl before Hannibal finally drew Will’s attention away.

“Come now, we need to clean up.”

“Okay.” He allowed himself to be stripped of the murder suit and his face wiped clean of the blood splatter.

Will woke slowly, the now familiar weight of Hannibal lying on top of him made it difficult for him to wake up. It was just so relaxing to be weighed down by the other man. It was comforting and it didn’t help that the sheets that he was lying upon were satin soft against his skin. He clutched at Hannibal’s back, wishing that they were dating for real. He never wanted to sleep without the man again.

“Darling?” A sleepy Hannibal blinked up at him from where his head was cradled in the junction of Will’s neck and shoulder. “We are dating for real.”

Will tensed as he realised that he had spoken his thoughts aloud before the words sunk in. “We are?”

“Yes, my sweet William.” Hannibal laughed lightly moving so his weight was on his forearms on either side of Will’s head. “We’ve been dating since you first demanded that I talk you out on dates so that you wouldn’t be seen as easy.”

Will was pretty sure his face was red as it felt incredibly hot. “Suddenly a lot of things make sense.” The closeness, near kisses, sharing a bed and how they got off together that one time…”I’m an idiot.” He groaned hitting his head against his pillow.

"It's alright, love. I'm not with you for your mind." Hannibal smiled softly down at him.

Will laughed. "That would be a first then." Usually all anyone cares about was his mind, his empathy.

“Darling, may I kiss you?” Hannibal whispered as he lowered his face to Will’s, his breath ghosted across his lips.

Will didn’t answer verbally and instead threaded a hand through Hannibal’s soft hair and brought their mouths together. It was terrible, their teeth clashed and it was more of a mouth smash than a kiss. They drew apart and laughed.

“Sorry.” Will grinned.

“It’s alright, practice makes perfect after all.” Hannibal smiled and gently brought their mouths together again. Soft lips met slightly chapped lips in a gentle kiss. Hannibal pulled back slightly before pecking him again and again before slowly deepening the kiss.

Will was in heaven. He licked at Hannibal’s mouth and took advantage of his moan to sneak his tongue into the other man’s mouth. They continued to kiss for a little while before they were disturbed by a phone ringing.

An embarrassing whine was pulled from him as Hannibal separated their mouths. Hannibal smiled at him and rubbed a thumb across Will’s face. He leant into the hand wanting nothing

more than to have the man kiss him again.

“I do believe that is your phone, my sweet William.” Hannibal chuckled.

Will groaned and closed his eyes. It was most likely Jack. He did have work today after all. “I don’t want to get up.”

“Neither do I, but I also do not what the man hammering on my door in his endeavour to find you.”

“Fine.” Will sighed, but was amused to notice that for all that Hannibal had said that he should get up, the man made no effort to remove himself from where he was lying on top of him.

Will’s phone rang again.

“If you want me to get up, you’re going to have to move.” Will pointed out. Hannibal huffed but did roll off him. “Thank you,” He hesitated before trying out an endearment of his own. “Babe.”

Hannibal was suddenly on him again.

“Mhmph!” Will found himself being ravished by his NOT FAKE, TOTALLY REAL BOYFRIEND. “Ah” He moaned as Hannibal rocked their hips together. Hannibal’s tongue was in his mouth, licking and sucking at his tongue. He clutched at him pulling their bodies closer together, rutting up against him.

“So delicious, sweet William.” Hannibal panted against his mouth. “So good for me, darling.” He kissed down Will’s neck, nipping and licking at his skin.

“Mhmm!” Will moaned. He was feeling so overwhelmed but so good! He bucked his hips up wanting more friction. He wanted more, wanted to feel more, taste more! He reached between their bodies as Hannibal sucked on his neck and slipped his hand into Hannibal’s pyjama trousers.

“Will!” Hannibal groaned into his neck as he palmed the man’s rather impressive cock. It felt hot, heavy and hard in hand. Hannibal bucked into his hand. “Ah.”

“You feel so good.” Will panted and moved his hands, stroking Hannibal’s cock. “Wanted to touch you.” He tightened his grip and tried to rub Hannibal like he himself liked to be touched. “Ever since we first slept together.”

Hannibal growled low in his throat then snaked a hand between them and pulled Will’s cock from his trousers. At the first touch of Hannibal’s hand Will moaned loudly and almost came there and then.

“Oh god.” Will whimpered as Hannibal moved his hand up and down his cock faster and faster. He tried to match his pace but far too soon Will crested over the edge and came hard, spilling over Hannibal’s hand and his own stomach. “Hannibal!” His own hand tightened in reflex, around Hannibal’s cock as he came.

“Will.” Hannibal grunted his hips thrusting into his hand before he too spilled over.

They lay there panting for a moment before Hannibal rolled off him with a groan. Will’s phone started to ring again in the background.

Will laughed. He could hardly believe what his life had become but he wouldn’t change it. He turned and brushed a kiss against Hannibal’s lips. “We should get cleaned up.” He murmured against his lips. “I can’t exactly answer my phone with dirty hands.” He held up his hand that was covered in Hannibal’s seed.

“You can shower first, darling.” Hannibal kissed him more firmly. “I’ll use a guest bathroom to get tidied up and make you some coffee.”

“Thanks, babe.” Will pecked him on the lips once more before rolling out of the bed, only just managing to avoid Hannibal’s grabby hands as they reached for him. He made a mental note that Hannibal really, really liked it when he used pet names.

When Will finally answered his phone it was clear that Jack was furious.

“Graham. Get your arse to the lab.” Jack barked before hanging up immediately afterwards.

“Good morning to you, too.” Will rolled his eyes. He was just in such a good mood and was not going to let Jack’s attitude bring him down. He pocketed his phone and walked into the kitchen to find Hannibal making sandwiches.

“Give me five more minutes, and I will have a lunch packed for you.” He told Will without looking away from his task.

“You don’t have to.” Will protested weekly as he walked up behind Hannibal and wrapped his arms around him, leaning into his back. “But thank you.”

“It is no hardship, darling.” Hannibal patted one of Will’s arms. “I have poured you a cup of coffee and made you up a thermos as well.”

“Thank you.” Will pressed a kiss to the back of Hannibal’s neck below his hair but above the collar of the dressing gown he was wearing. He stepped away to find his promised coffee.

“You are late.” Jack glared at Will as he entered the lab.

“Well I’m here now.” Will shrugged and took a sip from his thermos of coffee. He wasn’t going to offer any excuses. What Will did in his own time was his business and not Jacks. He joined the lab gremlins: Katz, Price and Zeller, around the slab which held Fabian’s body. “Also I meant to say yesterday but I’ve met this man before.”

“Why would you have needed to speak with a tailor?” Zeller asked dubiously.

“I needed a suit.” Will replied dryly before turning to Jack. “I only got as far as being measured before leaving. The man was a pervert and felt me up using the fact that he was taking my measurements as an excuse.”

“When was this?” Jack demanded.

“The Saturday before we caught the Minnesota Shrike.” Will told him. “I was going to put a bad review online but never get round to it because Hannibal found me a better tailor.”

“So Hannibal knew?”

“Only that the tailor made me uncomfortable.” Will lied. “Maybe I wasn’t the first one that he had assaulted? Maybe we should look into his past clients?”

“You think the ripper could be a client that he assaulted previously?” Jack basically repeated what Will had just said.

“Its a possibility.” Will shrugged. “I wouldn’t look into the most recent of clients but further back maybe even years ago. The Ripper wouldn’t be so careless to allow himself to be linked so easily….” Will trailed off before acting like he had an epiphany. “What if the reason why we can’t find links between the Ripper and his victims is because the link is so old and inconsequential?”

“Like, someone spilt a cup of coffee on him five years ago?” Katz asked skeptically.

“Yeah.”

“Well that certainly makes things harder for us.” Jack sighed. “But it is better than what we had before, good job.”

Will toasted him with his thermos of coffee. It was true that is what Hannibal did but with Jack pointed towards former clients of Fabian, it should be enough to point them away from Hannibal.

Tasteless

Chapter Notes

> I'm not overly happy with this chapter but it needed to be written to move things along. I hope you enjoy it anyway <3

Will spent the rest of the day giving lectures which were thankfully uninterrupted by Jack. After his last class cleared out and he was packing up his things he happened to glance up and spotted his boyfriend. His boyfriend. The fact that he and Hannibal were actually, properly in a relationship made his heart flutter.

“Darling.” Hannibal smiled softly at him as he came to a stop in front of the lectern.

“Hey,” Will couldn’t stop a goofy grin from spreading over his face.

“How were your classes?” Hannibal asked leaning over the lectern so his face was much, much closer to Will’s.

“G-good.” He stuttered as his eyes were drawn to Hannibal’s lips. Those wonderful soft sinful lips that as his boyfriend he could kiss…

“William, darling?” Hannibal’s amused voice brought him out of his staring. He flushed darkly and looked away.

Wait did he call me William? Will wondered. “Will isn’t short for William.” He told him. Hannibal had actually called him William before but usually it was preceded by ‘Sweet’ like the flower.

“Oh?” Hannibal leaned even closer drawing Will’s eyes back to his mouth. “What is it short for?”

“Uh.” Will blinked rapidly as he tried to formulate his thoughts. “It’s not. It's not short for anything.”

“So your name is just Will Graham?” Hannibal’s breath brushed Will’s lips. He hadn’t realised that their faces had gotten so close.

“Will Shannon Graham.” He admitted. “I have my mum’s name.”

“It's also a beautiful river in Ireland.” Hannibal murmured before finally closing the gap between them and sealing their lips together in a searing kiss.

Will held onto the lectern and was practically bent over it as he followed Hannibal’s lips as he started to pull away. He whined low in his throat as Hannibal’s mouth left his.

“Later darling.” Hannibal chuckled and gently pressed their lips together once more before pulling back completely. “I’m unfortunately not here for pleasure.”

“Then why?” Will would deny that he pouted until his dying day.

“Jack wanted to speak with me and asked that I collect you on the way to his office.”

“Is it about the Ripper?” Will asked.

“I do not think so,” he shook his head, his hair flopping cutely. Will wanted to run his hands through it.”

“Well we better get a move on.” He sighed. The sooner they got this over and done with the sooner he could go home, see his dogs and ravish Hannibal.

“Of course.” Hannibal gave him a knowing look which made him blush.

“Abigail Hobbs wants to go home.” Jack said in leu of greeting as Will and Hannibal walked into his office.

“Good afternoon, Jack.” Hannibal told him politely.

“Yes, yes good afternoon.” Jack waved away the pleasantries. “The Ripper isn’t going to drop another body for a few days and if Abigail wants to go home, I say we take her.”

“What Abigail wants and what she needs are two different things.” Alana, who Will hadn’t realised was in the room, spoke up. “Taking her out of a controlled environment would be reckless.” She was leaning against the far wall next to a window.

“You said she was practical.” Jack reminded her.

“That could just mean she has a dissociative disorder.” Will interjected. “Are we really going to risk her mental health just so you can find out answers about a dead man?”

He was ignored.

“You take her home, she may experience intense emotions, respond aggressively. Or reenact some aspect of the traumatic event without even realizing it.” Alana argued.

“Doctor Lecter?” Jack turned to Hannibal.

“Will and Doctor Bloom are right, but there is a scenario where revisiting the trauma event could help Abigail heal and actually prevent denial.” Hannibal put an emphasis on Will’s name. It was nice to know that at least one person in the room wasn’t ignoring him.

“We have a difference of opinion, therefore I’m choosing the opinion that best serves my agenda.”

“Will killed her father to save her life. If she sees Will as her savior and he doesn’t meet her expectations, she could transfer rage toward her father onto him.” Alana protested. Wait, why was she bringing him into this?

“He’ll deal with it.” Jack rudely spoke for him. “I want to know if Will’s right about our Copy Cat.”

“I am right here.” Will butted in. “If Abigail does direct her rage onto me then I will distance myself from her for her sake.” He directed to Alana before turning to Jack. “And if you do not respect my profiling then why am I even here?”

“That the Copy Cat called the Hobbs house before the murders?” Hannibal asked as if he didn’t know.

“Yeah.” Will confirmed as Jack nodded.

“We have no way of knowing what’s waiting for her when she goes home.” Alana continued to protest. “I want it known that I think this is a terrible idea.”

“Which is why I want you three to go with her.”

“This is ridiculous.” Will fumed as he climbed out of his car back at his house. Hannibal pulled up next to him and was quickly at his side. “Why Jack thinks its a good idea to send a traumatized teenager back to her house where her father killed people, i’ll never know!”

“He suspects that Abigail helped her father.” Hannibal commented as he opened the door and dogs spilled out.

“Which of course she did.” Will scoffed. “It was likely the only way that she was able to keep herself alive. It was a them or her situation.” He knelt down and accepted the kisses from his dogs. “Oh who’s a good doggy, you are,” he cooed at Zoe and then repeated it to all the others. He cuddled and kissed each of them before allowing them to run off to play and relieve themselves.

“If you wish to kiss me, you will have to wash your face first.” Hannibal said dryly as they entered the house.

Will laughed at the disgusted look on his boyfriend’s face at the thought of being kissed after he had just allowed all of his dogs to give him slobbery kisses. “I will, babe.” He promised but before he could take a step towards the bathroom to wash his face, arms like steel bands were wrapped around his waist and he pulled against a hard chest.

“Perhaps I should ravish you like this,” Hannibal growled against his ear before his mouth descended onto Will’s neck.

At the sensation of a hot lips on him, Will moaned. He tilted his head to give Hannibal more access and was rewarded by a gentle nip. God, he loved Hannibal’s mouth. The man sucked harshly at the spot where his neck met his shoulder.

“A-ah!” Will shuddered leaning back into the man, his knees felt weak. “Ngh.” Hannibal bit down on the flesh that he was sucking. He could feel the man’s cock pressing into his

backside as Hannibal pulled him tighter against himself. “S-so good.” He moaned.

Will was suddenly let go and Hannibal stepped away. He blinked dumbly, confused by the sudden change.

“Go wash your face darling.” Hannibal ordered with a short sharp smack to his arse.

“Ah!” Will yelped in shock before hurrying off to the bathroom to wash his face. He would get him back for that smack but first he really, really wanted to snog the man.

After a nice long snog fest Will and Hannibal sat at the small table in Will’s kitchen eating a simple dinner that Hannibal managed to throw together from what little there was in Will’s cupboards.

“So, what if we display the man from last night to be found whilst we are in Minnesota?” Will suggested. “It would further remove us from the suspect pool.”

“I agree.” Hannibal pressed his leg against Will’s. “We should also take more care in who we kill. The dog groomer and the tailor both have links to you and the man you chose is an animal abuser which you would obviously take offence to.”

“Ah.” Will froze.

“Don’t worry, darling.” Hannibal reached across the table to place his large, warm hand on Will’s. “I’ll take care of everything.”

After a late night in which Hannibal and Will displayed and half hid the body of Lars Thorwald so that it would be found after they were gone, they were in Minnesota. They pulled up to the Hobbs’ home in an expensive rental car. Will climbed out of the car first and

grimaced at the graffiti on the house. In eight foot tall letters, scrawled across the front of the house was the word ‘CANNIBALS’.

“How tasteless.” Alana scowled at the house.

“Poor choice of words.” Hannibal gently chided her. Alana blanched as she realised and was quickly turned to Abigail to apologise but found the teen staring at the faded rust-colored stain on the front step, where her mother died, her eyes brimming with tears but not overflowing.

“I was sort of expecting a body outline in chalk or tape.”

“They only do that if you’re still alive and taken to the hospital before they finish the crime scene.” Will told her but the words seemed to wash over Abigail. He wasn’t even sure she even heard them.

“Goodbye, mom.” She whispers to the stain as they walk past it and into the dark interior of the house.

Alana and Abigail enter first with Hannibal and Will close behind. Will felt distinctly uncomfortable when Abigail headed straight to the kitchen. The kitchen where he had killed her father. The room is more or less scrubbed, thoroughly gone over by cleaners.

“If you ever want to go, you just have to say so and we will go.” Alana was quick to tell her. She hadn’t actually said anything to Will at all since the time where he more or less kicked her out his house after she had dropped by unannounced. Maybe she still felt bad about it? He didn’t know and honestly he couldn’t find it in himself to care much either.

“Go where? Back to the hospital?” Abigail scoffed.

“For now.” Alana grimaced before taking a step back. Hannibal hung back to allow Will to follow Abigail into the kitchen. She looked at all the family pictures on the refrigerator and

must have noticed that they had all been turned around.

“They turned all the pictures over.”

“Crime scene cleaners will do that.” Alana answered and glanced at the clean table and the linoleum floor.

“They did a really good job. Is that where all my blood was?” She pointed to a bare patch of linoleum.

“Yes.” Will sighed. He could see it clearly in his head as if it happened just the day before and not weeks ago.

“You do this all the time? Go places and think about killing?”

“Too often.” He crossed his arms. He had a feeling that he would not like where this was going.

“So you pretended to be my dad?”

“And people like your dad.”

“What did that feel like? To be him?”

“It felt like I was talking to his shadow suspended in dust.”

“You think you knew him?”

“I tried to know him.” He admitted. “The attacks on you and your mother, they were different. Desperate. Your dad knew he was out of time. Someone told him we were coming.” Bloody Hannibal had told him.

“The man on the phone?” She queried and Will felt his blood turn to ice.

“It was a blocked call. Did you recognize his voice?” Please say no, he thought desperately and watched her carefully.

“I had never heard it before.” And it was only because Will had been watching her so closely that he saw the small, almost imperceptible glance at Hannibal. Shit.

“Was there anybody new in your father’s life.” Alana asked. “Someone you met or someone he talked about.”

Abigail shakes her head, “No.”

Will, Alana and Abigail scrubbed at the graffiti letters on the house with soap and brush. Hannibal was in charge of bringing them fresh buckets of soapy water. Will was amused that the man managed to get himself out of the hard labor of cleaning up the graffiti.

“Can you catch somebody’s crazy?” Abigail asked as she scrubbed hard at the letter ‘A’.

“Folie à deux." Alana’s french accent was awful.

“What?” She shot her psychiatrist a confused look.

“A French psychiatric term. ‘Madness shared by two.’”

The knife cut through the flesh of Lars Thorwald's throat like a hot knife through butter. Hot, wet, red blood spurted from the wound, hitting Will's face as he finished cutting across the throat. The wound looked like a mockery of a smile. He pulled the head back harsher as the body thrashed in it's death throws despite the fact that the man was drugged unconscious. He brought the knife back to the wound and cut deeper, through muscle and the windpipe until his knife struck bone. He then let go of the head and stood back up and stepped away from the body, watching the blood poured from the cut.

"It's like some demented water feature." He commented as Hannibal approached him.

"Magnificent." Hot breath tickled his ear as Hannibal loomed behind him.

"One can not be delusional if the belief in question is accepted as ordinary by others in that person's culture or subculture. Or family." Hannibal's voice brought Will back to the present and he shook away the memory in fear of getting an inappropriate boner.

"My dad didn't seem delusional. He was a perfectionist. After he skinned a deer, he would pluck the loose hair. Most people use a torch. Dad would remove all the hair by hand. He wanted to make sure he got every one of them."

"Your dad left almost no evidence." Will fished, knowing that Jack would be on his arse if they didn't bring back any new information.

"Is that why you let me come home? To find evidence?"

"It was one of many considerations." Hannibal said delicately.

"Are we going to re-enact the crime?" She turned to Will and Alana. "You be my dad. You be my mom." She then pointed at Hannibal. "And you can be the man on the phone."

Will realised that she knew. And that despite the fact that he felt somewhat paternal towards her, she is a threat. A threat to him, to Hannibal and their happiness. That is unacceptable. He could tell by the stiffening of Hannibal's frame that he was thinking the same.

All threats had to be eliminated.

Taking Care of Things

Will nodded at Hannibal giving him permission. The tension in the room was thick but Alana seemed to be completely unaware of it.

“We wanted you to come home to help you leave home behind.” She said to Abigail.

“You’re not going to find them you know.” Abigail sighed, turning away from Hannibal, turning her back on a predator.

“What makes you say that?” Will asked to further take the attention away from Hannibal. He wanted to give the man time to come up with a plan on how to get rid of her. Unfortunately Abigail would not be leaving Minnesota alive.

“He’d honour every part of them. Made plumbers putty out of elk bones. At least that’s what he told us. You know, to seal threads. Whatever bones were left of those girls is probably holding pipes together.”

“Do you know where he made this putty?”

“At our cabin in the woods.” Abigail admitted. “I can show you.”

Will watched as an unknown girl snuck up behind Abigail. She looked remarkably like her, like the victims of her father....

“Abigail…” Alana had noticed the new addition to the room as well. “It seems that you have a visitor.”

“Hey, Abigail.” The new girl waved. Abigail’s face lit up.

“Marissa!” She beamed at the other girl. It was clear that they were friends and that Abigail was just happy that Marissa hadn’t turned against her because of her father’s crimes.

Alana insists on giving the girls some time to themselves and wanders at a distance behind them as they walk and talk out in the land behind the house. This meant that Will and Hannibal were left alone in the house.

“She’s a threat.” Will sighed pushing his glasses up his nose.

“She is.” Hannibal agreed, stepping into Will’s personal space. Will leaned back against him as strong arms wrapped around him. “What do you want to do about it?” His breath was hot against Will’s ear and suddenly Will wished that they weren’t in bumfuck nowhere Minnesota but back at either his or Hannibal’s place so he could snog the man without it being inappropriate.

“She could ruin us.” Will pointed out forcing his mind to stay on track.

“She could.”

“I-I want…” He couldn’t bring himself to say the words.

“You want what, Will?” Hannibal said huskily into his ear. “What do you want?”

“I want her to be taken care of.” His heart was pounding in his chest and he felt short of breath but it was like a weight lifted off his shoulders as he spoke the words.

“Like the Tailor?”

“Yeah.”

“Then it will be done.” And so Will had sealed Abigail’s fate.

Will turned in Hannibal’s arms and kissed him gently, it was barely a brush of lips when there was a commotion outside.

“Piss off!” One of the girls yelled.

“What on earth?” Will pulled away from Hannibal to look out the window and saw that there was a stranger on the prosperity. An unknown man. “Shit, that's not good.”

“Or it could be.” Hannibal smirked. “We’ve just found our Copycat.”

“Oh?”

“Don’t worry my darling, I’ll take care of everything.” Hannibal promised him. “But for now we need to go out there.”

Will decided to trust his lover and let him lead the way outside. They arrived just as the man turned tailed and ran into the woods.

“Are you alright?” Will asked as he approached the girls. He was surprised that Alana hadn’t sounded the alarm but then noticed that she was further away from the girls talking to a woman that looked like Marissa.

“Yeah.” Abigail nodded as Alana and the new woman marched over to them.

“Who was that?” Hannibal asked.

“Just somebody’s brother.” Abigail shrugged carelessly. She didn’t seem distrubed at all at the fact that a strange man had approached her aggressively. Will wondered if having a serial killer as a father had messed with her self preservation instincts.

“Marissa. Come home.” The new woman and Alana had caught up to them. She looked furious but kept sending Abigail nervous looks. It was clear to Will that she believed that Abigail had been in league with her father. She was most likely correct.

“Stop being such a bitch.” Marissa said rudely, rolling her eyes before turning to Abigail. “See you later.”

“Bye.” Abigail smiled sadly and watched as her friend was stomped after her mother who could be heard berating her daughter about hanging out with criminals.

“You should head back up to the house with Alana while Hannibal and I check to see if the man is still lurking.”

Will and Hannibal clomped through the forest looking half heartedly for signs of the man that had confronted Abigail and her friend. They returned to the house with empty hands.

“He’s gone.” Will announced wondering if this would affect Hannibal’s plans. They hadn’t chanced speaking about it during their search just in case they were overheard. “You’ve never seen him before?” He asked Abigail as they all sat in the kitchen.

“No. Have you?”

Will shook his head “no.” Not that he had gotten a good look of the man but he was pretty sure that he hadn’t.

“We should report this, yes?” Hannibal asked as he stood as close as he could to Will without it being improper.

“Yeah,” Will sighed. “I’ll call Jack.”

In the end all four of them returned to the hotel. They would be in Minnesota for a few more days and Jack was on his way.

“What do you have planned?” Will asked Hannibal once they were alone in their room. He watched as the man loosened his tie and undid the top few buttons of his shirt, allowing some of his chest hair to peak out at him. God the man was attractive.

“Marissa was rather rude.” Hannibal said instead of answering Will’s question. Will was confused for all of one second before he caught on.

“The copy cat is going to strike again?”

“Clever boy.” Hannibal’s smile was all teeth.

At the sight of that smile, and the knowledge that Hannibal was going to kill for him, for *them*... Will couldn’t hold himself back any longer. He pounced. With two long strides he was across the room and in front of his lover. A hand tangled in the loosen tie. He yanked the man down to him and gave him a filthy kiss. Large hot hands came up to cradle his face. Will pulled on Hannibal’s lower lip with his teeth and sucked on it before licking into his mouth.

“As, ah, as much I am enjoying this, darling.” Hannibal pulled back from Will. His eyes were dark and Will could see the monster lurking just below the surface. “We should probably abstain until we are home.”

Now that just won't do. Will pooled together all he knew from romance novels that were his guilty pleasure and what he knew of Hannibal. Will pouted at Hannibal. "Please babe."

Hannibal was on him like a wild animal.

Their teeth clashed and hands roamed under clothing as Hannibal directed them over to the bed. The back of Will's knees met the edge of the mattress and suddenly he was on the bed and Hannibal was looming over him. The monster was fully unleashed and Will couldn't have been happier.

Large Hands gripped his hips harshly as a mouth crashed against his. Lips, teeth and tongues clashed and then Hannibal was pulled back panting. Will whined at the loss of contact but just as suddenly as he stopped, he was on him again. Will could only moan as Hannibal pulled at his clothes, licking and sucking at the skin he revealed as he undressed him.

Will gasped as Hannibal gave him a rather sharp nip to the crook of his neck before he manhandled Will so that he could pull his shirt over his head. Soon Will was just in his boxers while Hannibal was still fully dressed if not a little rumpled.

"No fair." He panted staring up at Hannibal. "You're wearing too many clothes, babe." Was Will taking advantage of the fact that his boyfriend seemed to go wild whenever he called him 'babe'? Yes, yes he was.

Hannibal growled and ripped his shirt off. As in literally ripped it off, buttons went flying and the probably very expensive shirt was tossed to the side, utterly ruined. He was straddling Will's hips, his gorgeously hairy chest on display.

"God, that was hot." Will blurted without thinking.

"Thank you, darling." Hannibal grinned wolfishly before shifting down Will's body a little and cupping Will through his boxers. Will moaned at the contact even just through the thin fabric, Hannibal's hand was searing hot. He wanted more. "But I think this is far hotter." Hannibal gently squeezed him.

“Ah!” Will bucked up into his hand. “H-Hannibal.”

“I want to taste you.” Hannibal asked huskily. “I suck you until you climax in my mouth and then swallow all that you can give me.”

“Oh god, yes please.” Will nodded rapidly. The very idea of Hannibal’s mouth being on him… “Please.”

He didn’t reply, he just jerked Will’s boxers further down his hips so his cock was free of the fabric. Will shuddered at the feeling of cold air on his cock but he didn’t have to deal with the cold air for long as before he could blink, Hannibal’s mouth was on him.

“Oh!” Will moaned as Hannibal swallowed him whole like the greedy thing he was. “Oh god.” Hannibal’s mouth was so hot and wet and- He came embarrassingly quickly. He could feel Hannibal swallowing around him as he gulped down Will’s seed. “I’m so sorry.” Will hid his face in his hands utterly humiliated. He hadn’t come that fast in years.

Hannibal pulled off his cock with a pop. He sat up and licked his lips. “Don’t apologize, my love.” He gently pulled Will’s hands away from his face. “You tasted delicious.”

“I didn’t mean to come so quickly.” His face felt hot from embarrassment and he felt like crying. God he was pathetic.

“I didn’t mind.” Hannibal cooed pulling him into his lap. “In fact it's probably a good thing that you did. I am out of practise and you are rather girthy.” He made a show of rubbing his jaw.

Will chuckled and wiped his eyes. “Can I return the favour?”

“Only if you want to darling.” He carded a hand through Will’s hair. “You do not need to.” He paused and then added. “Actually, it’s probably best if you don’t. I’m not exactly a young man and I will need my energy for later.”

Will laughed more freely and he felt better. “If you insist, old man.” He peaked Hannibal on the cheek and was amused to feel his five o’clock shadow.

“Old man?” Hannibal spluttered to Will’s utter joy. He had never seen the man so surprised. “I’ll show you, old man.”

Will laughed in joy as Hannibal smothered his face in kisses. He was starting to fall in love with this man.

Will woke to find Hannibal sneaking out of the room and smiled to himself as he knew that his lover was going out to murder Marissa. He turned back over and drifted back to sleep while wondering what kind of display he would get to see in the morning.

The Performance

Will woke slowly with a warm body draped over his. It was a familiar sensation. He adored how Hannibal always found his way on top of him during the night, the pressure of his body on his was just so relaxing. Heavier than a weighted blanket but just as warm and even better at keeping his anxiety at bay. It also helped knowing that the man was the notorious Chesapeake Ripper, that he would kill, had killed to protect him.

“Good morning.” Hannibal rumbled against his neck.

“Morning.” Will yawned and smoothed his hand down Hannibal’s back, relishing in the feeling of firm muscle. “Did you have a nice late night walk?”

“Mhmm.” He hummed and nuzzled the skin behind Will’s ear. “Very.”

“Our day should be rather eventful then.”

“What time is it?” In his sleepy relaxed state, Hannibal’s accent was thicker.

Will glanced over at the hotel clock and was surprised to see that he had woken rather early in the morning. “Barely half past six.”

“We have a few hours until we have to get up then.” Hannibal sighed gustily against Will’s neck, it tickled slightly.

Will wiggled, deliberately bucking his hips. “Whatever shall we do with the time?”

“I can think of a thing or two.” Hannibal propped himself up on his elbows and gazed down at Will with dark hungry eyes.

“I do believe that I owe you a blow job.” Will licked his lips and glanced down at where their

bodies were currently connected. He wanted to taste him, wanted to feel the weight of Hannibal on his tongue.

Hannibal rolled off him and spread his legs. “Bon appétit, mon chéri.”

Will peeled the duvet back, shivering slightly as the cooler hair touched his skin before he slid down the bed until his head was at his lover’s groin. His paisley pyjama bottoms were tented with his rather impressive erection. Saliva pooled in his mouth at the sight of it. He gently pulled the pants down until the erection popped free.

“God your cock is gorgeous.” Will commented as he took in the size and girth. He had only felt it up against his own and in his hand before, this was the first time he had been so close to it. He couldn’t wait to have it in his mouth.

“Thank you darling.” Hannibal smiled down at him, a large hand landed softly on his head. “As much as I don’t want to rush you, I would really rather appreciate it if you would start.”

Instead of responding verbally, Will gave the head of the cock, uncircumcised, a kitten lick. It was salty and musky and Will wanted more. Hannibal’s breath hitched at the action so Will did it again and again, just lapping at the weeping head as his lover trembled beneath him. The hand in his hair tightened its grip on his locks, not quite pulling Will closer but ensuring that he couldn’t move away, not that Will would want to. Daringly Will took the head into his mouth and sucked gently.

“Ah,” Hannibal inhaled sharply.

Pleased, Will flattened his tongue and took in more of his cock. It was heavy and hot and he loved how Hannibal quivered in an effort to not thrust into him. He lay his hands on both hips, pinning them to the bed, holding him still. He pulled back when he triggered his reflex, but kept the head in his mouth before slowly taking in more again, bobbing his head up and down, taking more and more each time.

“Oh!” Hannibal moaned his hips bucking against Will’s hands. “W-Will.”

Will hummed around the cock.

“Ngh, Will! I’m going to-”

Will picked up the pace, sucking harder and using his hand to stroke what couldn’t fit in his mouth. He felt Hannibal tense before come splurted into his mouth. It was thick, salty and thankfully tasted alright. It was probably thanks due to Hannibal’s impeccable diet that it didn’t taste like motor oil. Will drank it down and lapped gently at the head of the cock until Hannibal was practically whining from overstimulation. Only then did he pull away and tuck him gently back into his pyjama bottoms.

“Thank you for the meal.” Will teased gently as he climbed back up the bed until he could lay by Hannibal’s side.

“Devilish boy,” Hannibal growled playfully and straddled him, cupping his erection.

“Ah,” Will arched up into the hand moaning. “Your devilish boy.”

“And I am always willing to reward my boy for devilish acts.” Hannibal demurred before sliding down his body.

Much later, Will and the others were escorted by the local police force to the Hobbs’ Cabin. He stepped out of the car and took in the sight of the cabin again. It looked just as foreboding as it had last time, but he felt less dread and more anticipation. Hannibal had left him a gift after all.

Two policemen removed the crime scene tape obstructing the door before standing back and allowing the group to allow Hannibal, Will, Alana and Abigail to enter. They waited

respectively outside.

Inside it was exactly as the last time Will had seen it. Wrapped up in Crime Scene tape and rather haunted house esk in decor.

“He cleaned everything. He said he was afraid of germs but I guess he was just afraid of getting caught.” Abigail sighed as she looked around at the hunting equipment and animal skulls.

“No one else ever came up here with your dad? Except you?” Will asked. He honestly didn’t care but seeing as Alana was in the room he had to play his part as the Special Agent present. “Ever help him make plumbing putty?”

“No.” She shook her head. “He made everything by himself. Plumbing putty, glue, butter. He sold the pelts on ebay or in town. He made pillows. Carved knives out of leg bones. No parts went to waste. Otherwise it was murder.” She paused. “He was feeding them to us, wasn’t he?”

No one responds immediately, then:

“It’s very likely.” Hannibal told her gently.

Abigail crossed over to the gutting/skinning table. “Before he cut my throat, he told me he killed those girls so he wouldn’t have to kill me.” She wiped her finger in the dust that had started to collect on the work top.

“You’re not responsible for anything your father did, Abigail.” Alana approached her slowly, her voice sympathetic but if it had been directed towards him, Will would have found it patronising no matter how good the intention.

“If he would have just killed me, none of those girls would be dead.” She wrapped her arms around herself in a mimicry of a hug. A single drop of blood fell from the ceiling onto

Abigail's cheek. She wiped it off with her fingertip and stared at it for a brief moment in shock before glancing up.

Will, Hannibal and Alana follow her gaze. There is a deep red stain on the ceiling.

Will ran up the stairs and immediately in the room above where they had been standing he found the cause of the blood. A young woman was hung naked, impaled on a rack of antlers. He approached slowly and then carefully lifted the woman's head. It was Marissa.

"I need ERT at the Hobbs Cabin." Will distantly hears Alana call into her phone. He can't take his eyes off the scene. Hannibal made this for him. For them. It was the same as the girl in the field, the girl that they had later identified as Cassie Boyle...a girl who had a brother. Suddenly he knew where Hannibal planned to take things and he thought it was rather brilliant.

Abigail must have followed them up the stairs as suddenly her scream penetrated the room. "No!"

"Abigail." Alana tries to sooth her. "You shouldn't have to see this."

"Not Marissa, no!" She burst into tears.

"Come on, let's go outside." Alana manages to herd the distraught girl from the room, leaving Will and Hannibal alone with the body.

"Do you think she knew him?" Will asked as he stared at the swollen lips of the corpse. He was aware that they couldn't be truthful in their conversations here.

"Her killer?"

“No,” Will shook his head. “Abigail. Do you think she knew the guy down by the stream?”

“Somebody’s brother?”

“Not somebody. She said he asked her if she helped her dad take his sister’s lungs while she was alive.”

“Ah.” Hannibal acted surprised. “The young woman on the stag head.”

“Cassie Boyle. She had a brother. Nicholas. But Garret Jacob Hobbs didn’t kill Cassie Boyle.” With gloved hands and plastic tools, Will carefully levered Marissa’s jaw wide. Using a penlight he had on his keyring he shined it into Marissa’s mouth.

“I know.” They shared a knowing smile. “Garret Jacob Hobbs would have honoured every part of her.”

“You bring Abigail Hobbs back to Minnesota to find out if she had anything to do with her father’s murders and another girl dies.” Jack Crawford ranted as he entered the room. He didn’t either bother to greet them properly.

Will decided to ignore Jack’s rudeness and pointed out the forensic evidence that Hannibal had deliberately left. “There’s talcum on her lip. He was wearing gloves when he hit her. Split the latex on her tooth.”

“You said the Copy Cat was an intelligent psychopath.” Jack huffed crossing his arms. “No traceable motive. No patterns and that he would never kill like this again.”

“I may have been wrong about that.” Will shrugged but kind of regretted that he had said that. Well, hindsight is 20/20.

“Garret Jacob Hobbs didn’t hit girls. Why would his Copy Cat?”

“Perhaps he was provoked.” Hannibal suggested.

“He scraped his knuckle on her teeth.” Will pointed out. “There’s foreign tissue and what could be trace amounts of blood.”

“Where was Abigail Hobbs when this girl was murdered?” Jack demanded to know. Will felt annoyed on Abigail’s behalf. Even if he was planning to get rid of her, it was rather rude for him to accuse her.

“In her hotel room.” He deadpanned.

“And where were you?”

“I fell asleep early with Hannibal.”

“So you don’t know if she was in her hotel room or not.” Jack smiled victoriously.

“We believe Nicholas Boyle murdered this girl.” Hannibal interjected, moving the subject away from Abigail. “And his own sister.”

But Jack wasn’t easily distracted. “With or without Abigail Hobbs?”

“Without.” Will insisted.

“Did Abigail Hobbs know Cassie Boyle? Did she know Nicholas Boyle?” He continued to press.

“No.”

“You don’t think she knows them or you don’t want to think she knows them?”

“She said she didn’t know them.”

“Doctor Bloom said Abigail Hobbs has a penchant for manipulation. Is she manipulating you, Will?” Okay now that wasn’t called for.

“Agent Crawford.” Hannibal straightened up from where he was leaning on the wall. He narrowed his eyes at the man. He was ignored.

“You tell me you were wrong about Hobbs’ Copy Cat. I want to know what else you were wrong about.”

“Whoever killed the girl in the field, killed this girl. I’m right about that. He knew exactly how to mount the body. Wound patterns are almost identical to Cassie Boyle. The same design, same humiliation.” Will bit out.

Hannibal stood next to him in support. “Abigail Hobbs isn’t a killer but she could be the target of one.”

“I think it’s time Abigail Hobbs left home for good. Pack up whatever she needs to pack up and get her out of Minnesota. Now.” Jack ordered, dismissing them both.

Will and Hannibal left.

The reflection of police lights danced across the windscreen as Hannibal drove toward Abigail’s home, Will was sitting in the passenger seat and Abigail and Alana were in the back. Police Officers parted and removed the orange cones to allow them to drive into the Hobbs driveway unobstructed, quickly reforming behind Hannibal’s rental car to keep the

circus of reporters, news vans and curious onlookers. Will, Hannibal, Abigail and Alana get out of the car.

Immediately they are bombarded by questions from the various reporters:

“Abigail. Did you know you were a cannibal?”

“Abigail. Anything to say to the families of your father’s victims?”

“Abigail. Did your father feed you those girls?”

“Abigail-”

Will and Hannibal kept Abigail between them as they escorted her to the Hobbs Residence while their eyes regarded the Police Line. They finally looked away just as Marissa’s Mother pushed her way through the crowd.

A policeman awkwardly tried to hold her back. Like a paternal shield, Hannibal eased Abigail toward Alana and indicated that Will should stay with them before stepping in to intercept Marissa’s Mother. He bars her path, grips her arms.

“Why come back? Why did you come back here? Why did you come back?” Marissa’s mother demanded to know.

Abigail can’t seem to find her words so Will steps in front of her to deflect the accusations. Marissa’s Mother is so wracked with grief she can barely stand. A Policeman stepped in behind her as Alana moved in, easing her from Hannibal’s hold. Freddie suddenly appeared out of the shadows near the garage.

“Abigail.” She smiled coyly as she approached.

“Miss Lounds, you’re on the wrong side of the police line.” Hannibal narrowed his eyes.

“Go away Freddie.” Will sighed not in the mood for her antics. The woman was a vulture.

“This is my tale to tell. I’ve been covering the Minnesota Shrike long before you got involved.” She said self righteously.

The Police Officer grabbed Freddie by the elbow, ushering her away from the Hobbs House and Abigail.

As she was led away she called out over her shoulder, “I want to help you tell your story. You need me now more than ever.”

“I want to talk to her.” Abigail protested.

“No, you don’t.” Alana shook her head and pointed to the house. “Go inside.”

Abigail reluctantly did as instructed and Will followed her into the house. He glanced over his shoulder as he went and saw Hannibal help escort Freddie to the correct side of the police tape.

Once inside the house, Will settled Abigail on the settee in her living room that overlooked her back yard. This way, he thought she wouldn’t have to look at the media circus out the front.

“I’ll make you a cup of tea.” He told her. “Hopefully, Alana and Hannibal will join us shortly.” He didn’t receive a response so he just left her there clutching an embroidered pillow.

Will had only just filled the stove top kettle with water when he heard a scream. He dropped the kettle and pulled the gun before rushing back to where Abigail was. He crept into the room to find Nick Boyle pressing Abigail against the wall with his hand around his mouth and a knife to her stomach. It was just too good an opportunity to miss.

He hadn't been noticed yet so he stuck up behind Nick Boyle and before anyone could move he grabbed his arm that held the knife and shoved it into Abigail. It sank in easily.

"Ah!" Abigail gasped in pain.

"Hey, what?!" Nick struggled to get away but ended up pressing the knife into Abigail deeper. "Let go!"

"You wanted your revenge didn't you?" Will grinned as he watched the life fade from the girl that could have been his surrogate daughter if she hadn't been such a threat. Then as suddenly as he had grabbed him Will let go and backed into the doorway.

"What the hell man?!" Nick shouted, turning to Will, yanking the knife out of Abigail. "Look what you did!" He gestured to the girl as she sunk down onto her knees.

"Abigail!" Will yelled as if he was concerned and raised his gun. He shot Nick as the young man crouched to see if Abigail was alright. The bullet entered the back of Nick's skull and he crumpled like a piece of paper. Knowing that the gunshot would have been heard and that there was a literal police force out the front, Will dropped the gun and rushed to Abigail's side. He pushed Nick off her and felt for a pulse. He made sure to get her blood on his hands so it would look like he had tried to save her.

He couldn't find a pulse. He placed his ear by her mouth to double check if she was breathing but there was nothing. He quenched his smile as police ran into the room followed by Hannibal.

"Will!" Hannibal was at his side in an instant, pushing past the officers.

Will threw himself at Hannibal uncaring of the blood on his hand. Hannibal held him close but moved them away from the bodies so that they could be examined. They stood huddled together in the corner opposite the bodies, clutching at each other as if they would fall if they were not holding onto one another.

That's how Jack found them when he arrived on scene.

"What the hell happened?" He demanded striding towards the couple. "You were just supposed to collect her things and leave."

"Agent Crawford." Hannibal said in a warning tone.

"No, Dr Lecter, I would like to know what the hell happened that led to two people being dead on his watch!"

"I quit." Will's voice was hoarse as if he had been shouting for hours. He was quietly pleased at his acting.

"What was that?" Jack demanded coldly. "I did not just hear say that, did I?"

"I quit." He glared at him. "You don't respect me, and honestly getting into the minds of killers isn't very good for me."

"Will," Jack shouted. "You help save lives!"

"No, you won't change my mind." Will shook his head and tilted his head up to look at Hannibal who had a rather pleased glint in his eyes. "I want to go home."

"And so we shall." Hannibal stroked a hand through Will's hair. "As a consultant, you have a right to refuse or withdraw your services."

“No,” Will shook his head as he suddenly found the idea of working anywhere near where Jack had access to him deplorable. “I think I want to open a groomer’s.”

“That sounds like a lovely idea.”

“You’re going to quit the academy as well?” Jack recoiled.

“Yeah, I think I am.”

Tying Up Loose Ends

Chapter Notes

> So after this one, there is only one chapter left! Its been a joy to write this story and I want to thank you all for your support <3

Will cuddled into Hannibal's side on his couch. They had not long returned home after the Minnesota incident and had decided to stay at Will's for the night because of his dogs. It was nice and cosy with the lower almost amber light from the lamp and the numerous dogs on their beds dotted around the room. It was painfully domestic and Will wanted more, wanted to have this man in his life every day and every night but first they had a few loose ends to tie up.

"The Ripper needs to die." Will sighed, tilting his head up to look at Hannibl's face. "He needs to make one more kill, someone not affiliated with either of us and then needs to be caught and preferable commit suicide by cop."

"Hmm, Have you got anyone in mind for who the Ripper should be?" Hannibal carded a hand through Will's hair.

Will was pleased that he had instantly caught onto where he was going with his plan. "I was thinking that I may accidently take photos of the list of Fabian's past clients when I go in tomorrow to pack up my desk and hand in my resignation." Will smirked. "We could comb through the list and see if any of his previous patrons would fit our needs."

"That sounds reasonable." Will felt Hannibal nod. "However, I have been doing some thinking myself and I have a candidate lined up also."

"Oh?" Will twisted to so he could look at Hannibal more fully. "Who?"

"What do you know about a man called Dr Frederick Chilton?"

“An awful psychiatrist that has a mental hard on for me?” Will grimaced.

Hannibal scowled. “All the more reason for him to be our scapegoat then.”

“Let’s check the list anyway.” Will sighed and relaxed back against him. “We may end up finding a better fit. Although he does have the medical knowledge similar to the Ripper.”

“Very well.” He mumbled into Will’s hair. “Shall we go to bed, my dear sweet William?”

“I thought I told you that wasn’t my name, babe.” Will teased only to, and he will deny it to his dying day, squeak as the man beside him suddenly surged up and gathered him in his arms. With surprising strength Hannibal had Will draped over his shoulder and all he could do was gasp and laugh.

“Hannibal!” He shrieked as his world turned upside down and he was treated to the delightful sight of his lovers arse.

Hannibal didn’t reply and before Will knew it he was being tossed onto his bed. He bounced as he landed and slightly mused that the bed was rather more sturdy than he had thought it to be. He stared up at Hannibal as he loomed over him, his gaze was intense. Will shivered but it was not because he was cold. God, he was hot and Will wanted him desperately.

“Don’t just stand there.” Will scowled as Hannibal made no move to climb onto the bed. He yanked off his own shirt and started to undo his trousers. “Or I will start without you.” He hand just managed to undo his zip when Hannibal pounced.

“Devilish boy.” Hannibal growled his weight pressing down on him deliciously. He rolled his hips teasingly. “Minx.” Hannibal nipped at his lips in response.

“Snail.” He taunted pulling at Hannibal’s shirt. “You’re wearing too many clothes.”

“I’ll show you a snail.” Hannibal bared his teeth and in an attractive show of strength he pulled Will’s hands away from his shirt and forced them above his head. “I can do slow.”

“Hannibal.” Will whined and bucked his hips wanting some friction. “I need-” He cut himself off with a moan as a hot mouth found his nipple and sucked. “Oh!”

He felt Hannibal smile against his skin before he began sucking in earnest, nipping and pulling at the nub until it was painfully erect and he was squirming in pleasure. Will fought against the hands holding his arms above his head. He wanted to touch Hannibal but he was too strong. It wasn’t fair, Hannibal’s mouth was just so talented and he wanted to touch him!

“Hannibal please!” He begged, he wiggled and squirmed trying to get some relief. His erection was straining against his trousers that he hadn’t managed to get off.

Hannibal pulled his mouth off his nipple with a pop, leaving it wet and cold from the air hitting it. “What do you want darling?” He asked, his voice was low and sultry. He trailed a wet finger down his chest raising goosebumps in its wake.

Will trembled. “I w-want to touch you.”

“Oh? And why should I let you after you were so rude?” He looked down at him with hooded eyes.

“I’m sorry.”

“Are you?” Hannibal leant back down and sucked hickies onto his neck.

“Yes!” Will moaned. “Please!”

“Hmm.” He hummed against Will’s neck sending shivers down his spine. “I suppose you have been rather good lately.” He slowly released his hands and tangled on in Will’s hair to

bring his face into a scorching kiss.

The moment Will's hands were free he grabbed Hannibal's arse and thrust up into his hips while pulling his lover down against him. They groaned into each other's mouths and rocked together. Will dug his fingers harder into Hannibal's arse, hoping to bruise it as he encouraged him to move faster against him. Hannibal had ripped his mouth away from Will's and instead attached himself to his neck and sucked fiercely. They were moving together, clinging to the other's body tightly, lips brushing wherever they could touch, teeth following in their trail.

"Ah, ah." Will panted as he felt his arousal coil tighter and tighter in his gut. He came, shuddering and moaning his lover's name. "Hannibal!" His hips continued to jerk with aftershocks.

"Will." Hannibal grunted rutting harshly against him before he too finished.

They lay slumped in bed, completely entangled in a sweaty sticky mess. The room was filled with their steadying breathing as they slowly calmed down and they drifted off to sleep despite the mess that they lay in.

Will decided to skip the middleman and hand in his resignation to HR. He also planned to cash in all of his mandatory holiday days that he had never actually taken in lieu of having to give the two weeks notice. He would prefer to be out from under Jack's thumb before he returned and seeing as the body that the Ripper left had not yet been discovered he was sure to return as soon as it was.

He was actually rather surprised that the bloodless display that he and Hannibal had left hadn't been discovered yet. They hadn't exactly hidden it. Oh well, it meant that they didn't have the alibi that they wanted but that just meant that it was even more important that they have a scapegoat.

"Hey Debbie." Will greeted the face of the HR department.

“Oh, Hi Will.” She smiled at him. “What can we do to help you today? Is Jack not honouring the stipulations in your contract?”

“Ah, actually.” He suddenly felt rather sheepish. After all that work that HR did to amend his contract so Jack couldn’t walk all over him and here he was around a month later quitting. “I’m handing in my resignation.” He held out the file that will end his current career.

“Oh no,” Debbie frowned. “What happened?” She asked as she accepted the file. “Is it truly unresolvable?”

“I’m not sure how much you’ve been aware of. But do you know about the Minnesota Shrike case?” Will sighed.

“The man was cannibalising girls right?”

“Yeah, well he had a daughter and my partner and I became rather attached to her.” Will allowed the grief of losing what could have been a wonderful father daughter relationship, if only Abigail hadn’t tried to rock the boat, to show on his face. “She uh.” He swallowed and blinked back tears. “She was murdered yesterday.”

“Oh Will.” Debbie’s face crumpled in compassion.

“We uh. Jack had us take her back to Minnesota to get more evidence you know? And it turns out that there was a copy cat that we hadn’t caught and well he turned up.” He took a shuddery breath. “I had only left the room for less than five minutes. But there was a scream and…” He trailed off and looked away. He took a long deep breath. “Anyway, uh. The official reason is that Jack refuses to respect me but continues to demand that I work like a magic eight ball even when he doesn’t like my answers.”

“You could just pull out of the consulting job.” Debbie offered to allow Will to divert the conversation away from Abigail’s death.

“True but the man would likely hound me until I either agreed to consult again or quit. So I’m just trying to avoid the hounding part.”

“Well, we’re going to miss you.” She smiled weakly at him before donning her professional mask. “I will make sure this is filed and accepted. I recommend that instead of doing this as a two week notice that you use up the holiday days that you have stored. We’ll arrange cover for your classes until a new professor can be found.”

“That’s the plan.” He nodded. “Thanks.”

“Have a good life Will.”

“You too, Debbie.”

Will went to his office for the last time. He sat in his chair for the last time. He emailed his students en-masse divulging that he was leaving effective immediately but there would be cover until a new professor would be found. That although he was no longer their professor he expected them to ace their exams like he knew that they were all capable of doing.

With that email sent he started to pack up his office. He made sure to snap a couple of photos of the list of past clients of Fabian’s Tailor before sliding them back into the folder that he would have to drop off at either Jack’s office or the lab. It was too sensitive to have lying around and he had only been allowed to keep it as he kept his office locked. Everything was packed away easily as he never kept much in his office in the first place because he was hardly there to use it as he preferred to work from home and all his office hours were done through the medium of email.

He drove to Hannibal’s house, his dog sitter would check on the dogs, as Hannibal had taken the day off. They had both expected to still be in Minnesota. He pulled up to the house and as he turned his engine off Hannibal opened the door to the house and stepped out to greet him.

“Hey,” Will smiled at him as he climbed out of the car, pausing on the way to the house to grab his box of stuff and lock his car.

“How did it go?” Hannibal asked as he relieved Will of the box.

“Thankfully Debbie was on reception.” Will told him as he shed his coat in the entryway. “I explained why I was quitting and she suggested that I used up my Holiday days instead of having a two week notice.”

“I’m glad it went smoothly.” Hannibal placed the box on the hall table before pulling Will into his arms. “Hello darling.”

“Hi.” Will grinned goofily at him and stepped closer into the embrace. He brushed their lips together. The kiss deepened for a moment before Will pulled back breathless. “As much as I would love to continue kissing you we have a scapegoat to find.”

“Always so reasonable.” Hannibal teased resting his forehead against his. “Very Well.” He sighed pulling back. “We didn’t have time for breakfast this morning, shall I whip us up something?”

“And whose fault was that?” Will blushed darkly as he remembered their morning activities.

“I would argue that it is yours for being so irresistible.” Hannibal leered at him before picking up the box again and leading the way to the kitchen.

Will spluttered wordlessly after his boyfriend.

“Come along Will.” Hannibal called over his shoulder.

Will rolled his eyes and followed him. He should be used to Hannibal’s way of flirting by now. He entered the kitchen to find Hannibal already preparing food. The box had been placed on one of the bar stools that were around the island. Will sat on the stool next to it and pulled out his phone.

“I took photos of the list, like we planned.” He waved his phone in Hannibal’s direction.

“Excellent,” Hannibal commented as he chopped something before adding it to the frying pan. The sound of sizzling and the smell of cooking onions filled the air. Will’s stomach growled in response. Hannibal sent him a fond smile. “Have a look and see if you recognise any of the names. I’ll have a look afterwards.”

Will hummed in acknowledgement as he scanned the names and paused. He rolled his eyes as he registered the familiar name. “You already knew that Chilton was on the list didn’t you?”

“I may have.”

“Fine.” Will sighed gustily. He placed his phone face down on the counter and focused his attention on his dramatic lover. “What’s the plan?”

“What makes you think I have a plan?” Hannibal asked faux innocently as he plated whatever goodness he had been making.

“Because darlin’ you always have a plan.” Will drawled, deliberately playing up his accent.

Hannibal looked at him fondly before asking, “What do you know of Miriam Lass?”

“Jack’s protege that went missing…” Will trailed off as he realised why Hannibal was mentioning her. “She’s still alive isn’t she.” He wanted to shake the man, didn’t he realise that having her alive was a terrible risk?!

“I knew that one day the Ripper would have to be caught.” He told Will as he placed the plates on the counter in front of him and sat on his own bar stool. “And so since that brilliant young woman discovered my identity I knew that I couldn’t let her go to waste.”

“So what? You’ve just been keeping her in the basement for the last two years?” Will asked skeptically. He was pretty sure that he wasn’t keeping her in the basement as he had seen no sign of her when he was down there. He wasn’t however terribly surprised that he had kept her alive, Hannibal was just that kind of a dramatic shit.

“No of course not.” Hannibal looked offended briefly before schooling his face. “I have her somewhere else.”

“Of course, so what is the plan?” Will brought them back on topic but made a mental note to bring up that keeping people imprisoned was a no go.

“I have been psychically driving her for the past two years to believe that Chilton was her captor and thus the Chesapeake Ripper.” He said smugly.

Will was amused to find that he found his smugness rather adorable. “Is that why you were so adamant about framing him?”

“Eat your food, darling.”

Will smiled fondly at his lover who was most definitely pouting. “Yes, dear.”

The Pawfect Ending

Chapter Notes

> Well this has been a wild ride from start to finish. I want to thank each and everyone of you for reading and I hope this ending does my story justice. <3 Enjoy!

It had been just over two weeks since Will had quit his job. Two blissful weeks without Jack hounding him. Two weeks that he spent getting most of his dogs rehomed. It was heartbreaking but he knew that it was something he had had to do. It wasn't fair on dogs, he just couldn't give them the attention that they deserved what with there being so many of them. He kept his two old ladies and Winston. He loved Zoe and Ellie; he had had them the longest and couldn't bear the thought of them living the rest of their lives without him. He also kept Winston, who despite being his newest dog was also one of his favourites. He was just so loyal and seemed to get along with Hannibal the best.

While he was rehoming his dogs and starting to put more thought into his business idea, Hannibal was tasked with setting Chilton up. The third body of his sounder had already been displayed. It was someone that Hannibal had witnessed being rude to Chilton. This worked for two reasons. One: Hannibal hated the rude and Will had already implied that the Ripper was killing those that were rude to him; Two: It further linked Chilton to the Ripper.

The bloodless body of Lars Thorwald had been found less than a day after Will had quit and this last body was discovered a few days after that. The only thing Will knew about the last victim was that his lungs tasted rather nice in a red wine sauce.

Hannibal had been roped into the Ripper investigation by Jack. It was a childish move on Jack’s part; if he couldn’t have Will working as his magic eight ball then Hannibal was the next best thing. It was a horribly manipulative way of getting to use Will even after he had quit. Jack would assume that Hannibal likely would share details of the case with Will and then Will would share his thoughts with him...? Unlucky for Jack, he was playing right into Hannibal’s hands.

Will was wandering around the Baltimore high street looking for a commercial space for sale for his dog grooming business when his phone rang.

“Hello?”

“Will.” Hannibal sounded remarkably cheerful.

“You sound happy.” Will said as he ducked out of the main pedestrian traffic.

“We caught the Chesapeake Ripper.”

“What?” He didn’t realise that Hannibal had set everything up already. “Who was it?” He asked, despite knowing.

“It was Dr Chilton of all people.” Hannibal sighed, and Will knew Hannibal had an audience. “And Miriam Lass was found late last night.”

“Is that why I woke up alone this morning?” Will had felt rather disgruntled by the fact. He missed kissing Hannibal good morning.

“Yes, darling.”

“So what happens now?”

“Well things got complicated.” Hannibal said delicately.

“Oh?”

“Miriam Lass understandably had a bad reaction when Chilton was brought in to do a second opinion on her mental health. She got hold of Jack’s gun and shot him.”

Will hadn't been expecting that.

"In the ensuing investigation there was plenty of forensic evidence at Chilton's home to implicate him as the Chesapeake Ripper and there was evidence of where he kept Miss Lass."

"Sounds like you've had a busy day." Will said at last. Their plan had worked. Chilton was framed, Miriam Lass had recognised him as her captor and there was enough evidence planted to cement the fact that he was the ripper. What they couldn't have predicted was for the woman to shoot him.

"It seems like it will be even busier for Jack." Hannibal said. "He's facing an investigation into how he handled the case and all his previous cases. The Director herself came down to speak to us and you will be interested to know that your former colleague who did not wish to be named mentioned that he was inappropriate in how he handled you."

"So Jack's in trouble?" Will asked.

"Up to his neck."

"To be honest I never thought that Jack would ever…" He trailed off and sighed. "It never really occurred to me to report him for being such a hardass."

"He wasn't just a *hardass* ." Will could hear Hannibal's grimace at saying the word. "He abused his authority and I fear to think how much worse he would have treated you if you had not approached HR about the consulting job that he forced you into." It was at this point that Will realised that Alana was probably in the same room as him. After all Hannibal was more likely to suggest that they eat him. Well, okay. He wouldn't phrase it like that but he would imply that they should.

"At least he's being dealt with now." Not that Will particularly cared what happened to Jack. He had quit his job after all and thankfully no longer had a reason to deal with him. Although

he couldn't deny that he was darkly pleased that Jack was in trouble with his boss.

"Very true. And with the Chesapeake Ripper no longer looming over the heads of the citizens of Maryland can rest easy." Meaning that they were free of suspicion and could continue on with their lives without worry of being caught.

"Yeah." Will smiled gently.

"How is the hunt for a commercial space going?"

"I haven't found a place yet but what do you think about the name 'Pawfect Groomers?" Will asked, walking down the highstreet for the perfect place to set up his groomers again weighing up the benefits of having his business on this particular street or whether he should branch a bit further out.

"It's a bit *ruff* ." Hannibal teased. "But I like it."

"Good one." Will chuckled but then he spotted a 'for sale' sign outside of the Fabian's Tailor. "Actually, I think I have found where I want to set up shop." It pleased the darker side of him to have his new business in a place where Hannibal had murdered the man that had assaulted him. He had hoped that the place would be for sale now that the owner was dead so he hadn't exactly been looking very hard for somewhere else in hopes that it would be available. He also hadn't looked it up online as he wanted it to be a surprise for Hannibal.

"I'm glad to hear that darling." Hannibal sounded pleased. "I'm almost done here, shall I meet you at the estate agents?"

"Nah, I've got this." Will shook his head despite the fact that Hannibal couldn't see him. "I have a few more things to do as well."

"If you are sure darling?"

“Yeah, I’ll see you later at your place?”

“Actually, I wanted to ask you this in person, however I find myself loath to wait.” Hannibal sighed gustily down the phone. “Darling, would you do me the honour of moving in with me?”

“I would love to.” A huge grin spread across Will’s face.

“I’ll arrange for a dog house to be built in the guard for your family members, so you won’t need to worry-” Hannibal continued on as if he hadn’t heard Will’s positive response.

“Babe!” Will raised his voice to get Hannibal’s attention, well that and the use of ‘babe’ always seemed to get his sole attention. He heard the man’s breathing hitch. “I was also going to wait to tell you in person but I have rehomed most of my dogs.”

“Will!” Hannibal exclaimed breathlessly.

“I’m keeping three of them.” He ignored the interruption. “My two old ladies, Zoe and Ellie and then Winston, who I know you like best.”

“Are you sure?” He sounded hesitant.

“It's already done. But yes I’m sure.”

“Oh darling.”

“So I’ll see you at home?” He asked, implying that Hannibal’s house was already his home.

“Sounds pawfect.” He chuckled fondly.

“Hannibal” Will groaned and rolled his eyes. “I’ll see you later.” He hung up and headed to the estate agents. He would put in an offer on the commercial space and then he would return to Wolf Trap and pack up a lot of his things. He no longer needed his boat on the sea after all, he had Hannibal.

End Notes

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